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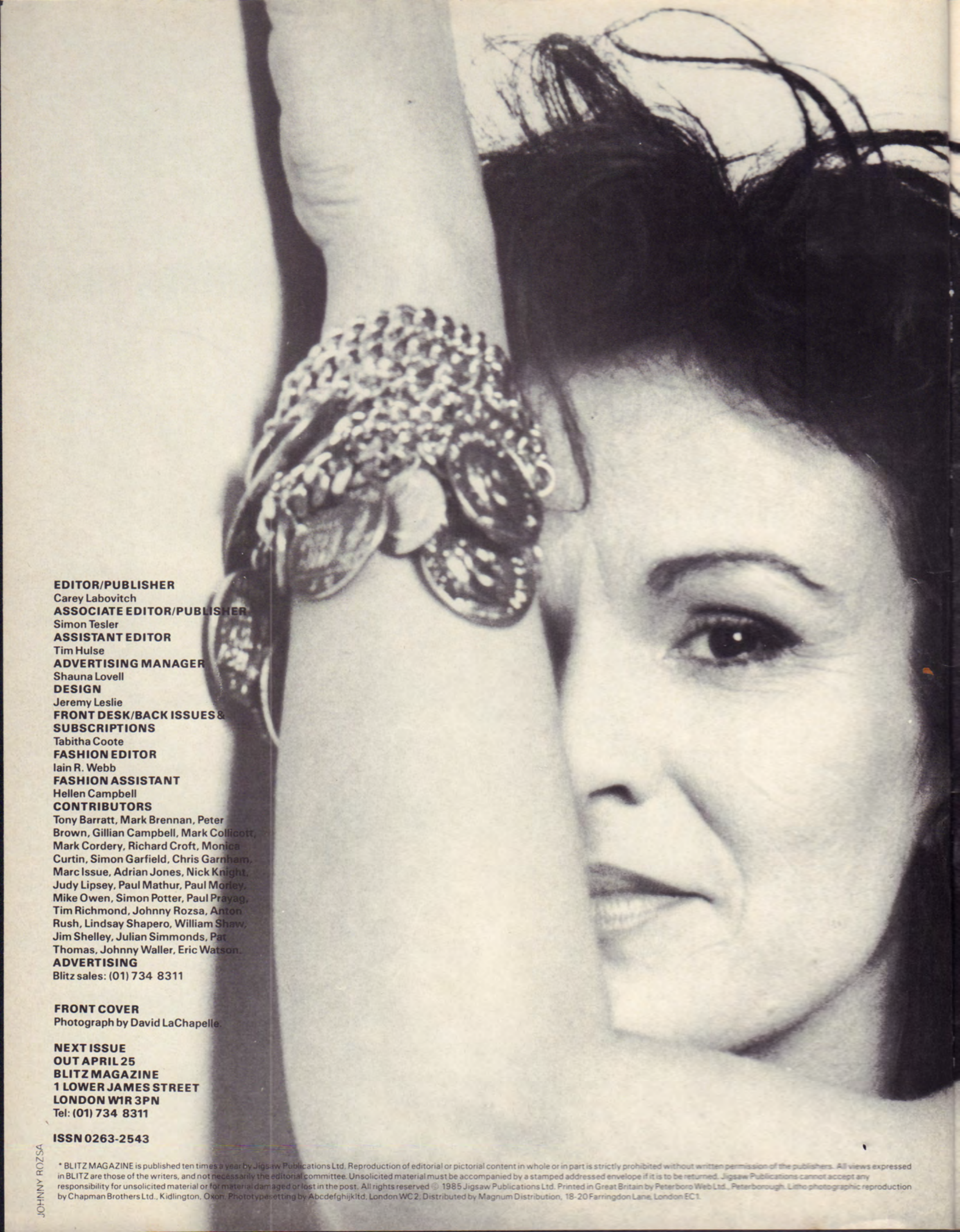

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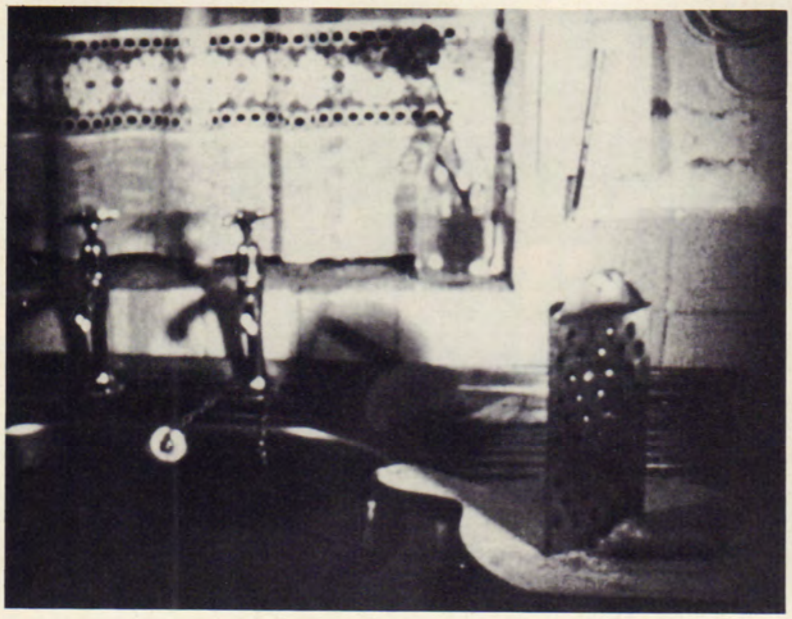
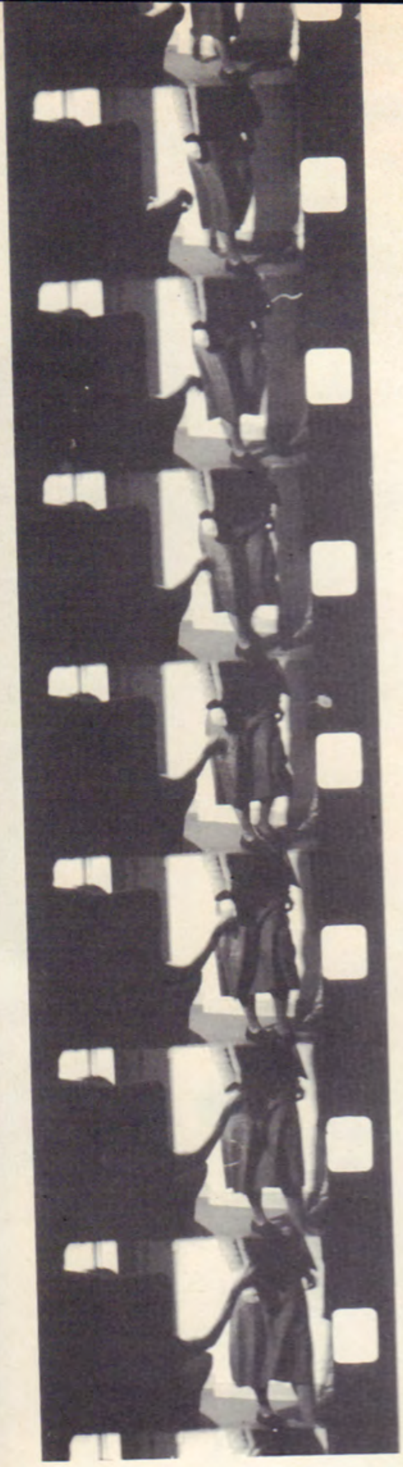
JIG





SUPER 8 FESTIVAL

●Super 8 Film in this country is an almost invisible medium. You won't see any of the stuff on television, and very little in cinemas – it is generally seen in obscure locations only by small coteries of enthusiasts. But for thousands of film-makers worldwide it is a principal means of artistic, political and personal expression.

From May 27th until June 1st, Leicester's Phoenix Arts Centre plays host to the International Super 8 Film Festival, where we will be able to see the work of roughly 140 independent film makers from here, there and everywhere, *including* Venezuela. The huge (over 200) number of films being screened will include documentary, musical items, art and formalistic structural essays. There will be workshops and technical advice for film-makers. Perhaps the most exciting aspect after the feat of gathering all this together is that the projection facilities for the festival are unequalled for Super 8 anywhere in this country. A rare experience.

If you're a film-maker, and you're very quick, you can apply for inclusion of your work in the festival by calling the organiser, the indomitable Laraine Porter, at the Leicester Independent Film and Video Association, on 0533-559711. And the rest: Get you to Leicester, and check out the Invisible Film Festival....

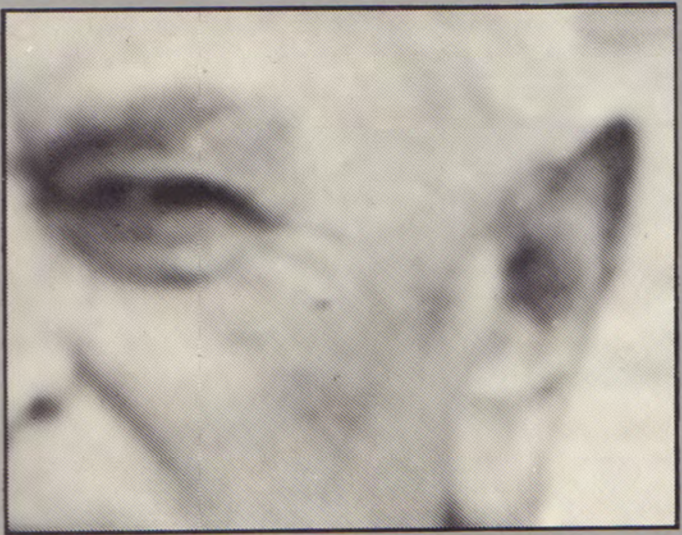
Marc Issue

Top Left: **For A Woman** by Carol Salter; Middle Left: **Danse Des Cygnets** by Steve Binnion & Larraine Porter; Below Left: **Sounds Specific** by Steve Binnion; Below Right: **Little Secret** by Steve Binnion and Toby Kettle; Left: **I Got You Babe** by Liz Soden.

S A W

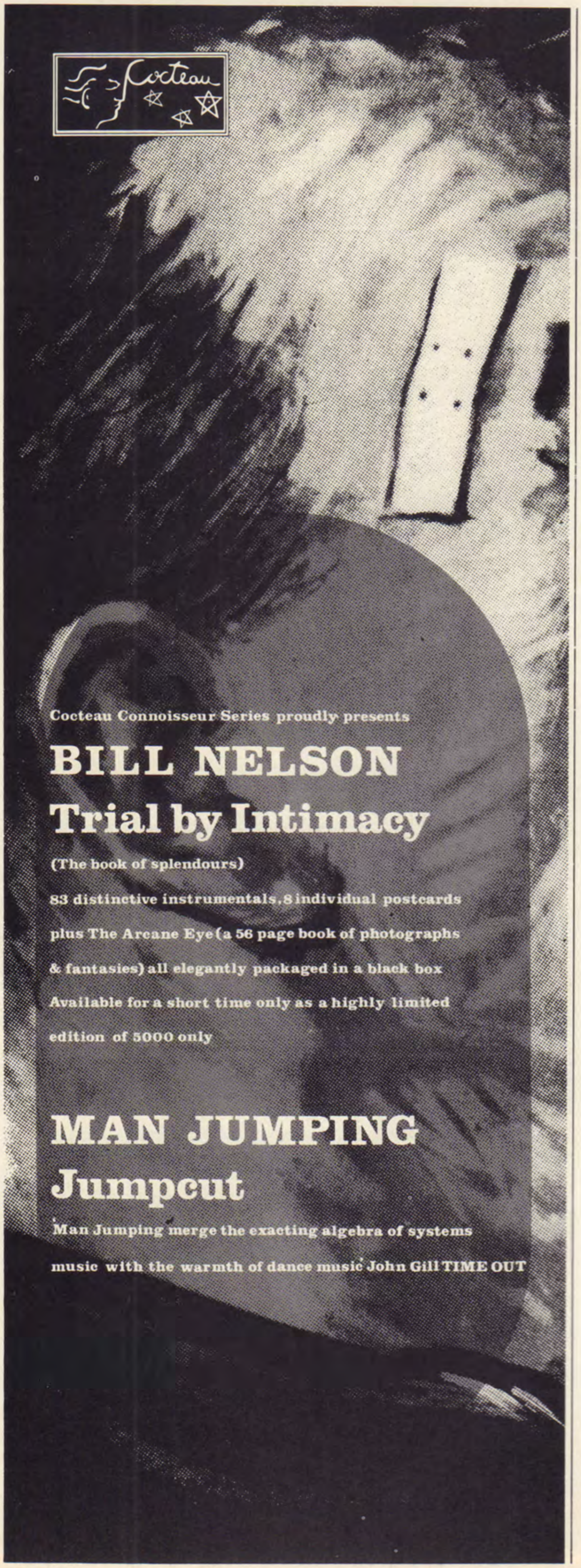
CONSIDERED OPINION

Rupert Everett.


One of David Lean's ears.

Mick Jagger.

Best Tabloid Headline: 'Mr G Wins Tsar Wars' – *The Sun's* interpretation of Mikhail Gorbachev's accession to the Soviet leadership.
Most Tiresome Trend: Middle-aged men making solo albums. Last month, Mick Jagger. Next month, Bryan Ferry.
Second Most Tiresome Trend: People who write about middle-aged men making solo albums.
Best Names Featured in The Tatler: Simon Sebag-Montefiore, Robert Marsden-Smedley, Charis Nutti de Biasi, Princess Katalin zu Windisch-Graetz, and the splendid sounding Ambassador Jaime de Pinies.
Best Album Title: *BAM! Mustaphas Play Stereo* by the 3 Mustaphas 3, on Globestar Records.
Best Band Name: The Beasts of Bourbon, on Hybrid Records.
Best Films: Dance With A Stranger, Brazil, A Soldier's Story.
Best Vocal Impersonation of Dennis Healey: Rupert Everett.
Worst Films: 2010, Ordeal by Innocence.
Most Gratuitously Offensive Film: Scream For Help.
Most Gratuitously Offensive Film Director: Michael Winner (Scream For Help, Death Wish, Death Wish II, and the forthcoming Death Wish III).
Best Audition for a Role in It Ain't Half Hot Mum: Alec Guiness blacked up as the Brahmin mystic Godbole in Sir David Lean's *A Passage To India.*
Most Interesting Physical Characteristic: Sir David Lean's ears.
Best Videos: Company of Wolves (Palace), Purple Rain (Warner).
Most Boring Topic of Conversation: The BBC's 'Science of Sexual Attraction' documentary, and how facile/fascinating/daring (delete as applicable) it was.
Most Boring Topic of Conversation Amongst Radio One DJs: Prince at the BPI awards (still).
Most Grotesque TV Personality: Su Pollard.
Most Essential TV Repeats: The Young Ones.
Most Spineless Political Evasion: Steve Wright's unwillingness on Radio One's Roundtable to comment on Billy Bragg's *Between The Wars* because of its political content.
Best TV advertisement: Carling Black Label's OAP breakdancer.
Most Annoying TV advertisement: Renault 5 – 'What's *yours* called?'
Best Poster advertisement: Benson & Hedges' pack and shaving foam.
Most Unimaginative Poster Ad Campaign: Silk Cut's variations on a theme.
Best New Club: Fifi of Yip Yip Coyote's Carousel club in Great Queen Street, London WC2.
Most Essential Bedtime Reading: Any of Chester Himes' Harlem crime thrillers, especially *Cotton Comes To Harlem*, recently reprinted by Allison & Busby.
Unluckiest Action in the Name of Democracy: Virgin rush-releasing a video of the Channel 4 Official Secrets programme banned by the IBA on the very day that the ban was lifted.
Best Student Grant: Prince Edward's £20,000 allocation from the Civil List.
Sound Investment of the Month: Copies of Private Eye. The first edition of the libel issue was changing hands for more than twice its cover price.
Something To Look Forward To: Summer!



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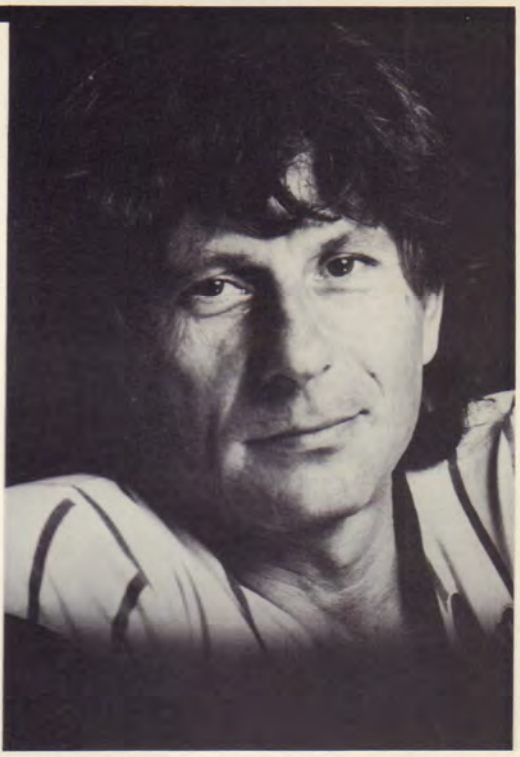


Roman

APRIL BOOKS REVIEWED BY MARC ISSUE

● Presumably premeditatedly, predominantly fiction this month. Seven books, six firsts.

First book is a first book: David Leavitt's **Family Dancing** *(Viking, £8.95)* is a crisp and contemporary collection of short stories by a twenty-four year-old Californian, delineating the emotional rituals of nuclear family life, developing into family life of other kinds. The emotional and pschological 'damage' that families do to the people who live in them is gone into with some relish. This is heavy on resonant dialogue, positively dripping with subtext, and perhaps young David ought to relax a little. The prose is sparse, like modern furniture in a plain room. You'll go through it like a greased proofreader. Leavitt will write a pokey and poignant screenplay one of these days, just see if he doesn't . . .

Jodie Klavans, twenty-eight, of Norfolk Virginia, turns in a grubbily realistic semi-autobiography in **God, He Was Good** *(Picador, £2.50)*. She traces the rough textures of life as a low-rent beauty technician, and traces those textures with broken nails, by the sound of it. Klavans has a brutal, unforgiving way with dialogue, and brings some hard news for the romantics. Her characters march in, bruise each other, and leave your room in a mess. Uncompromising.

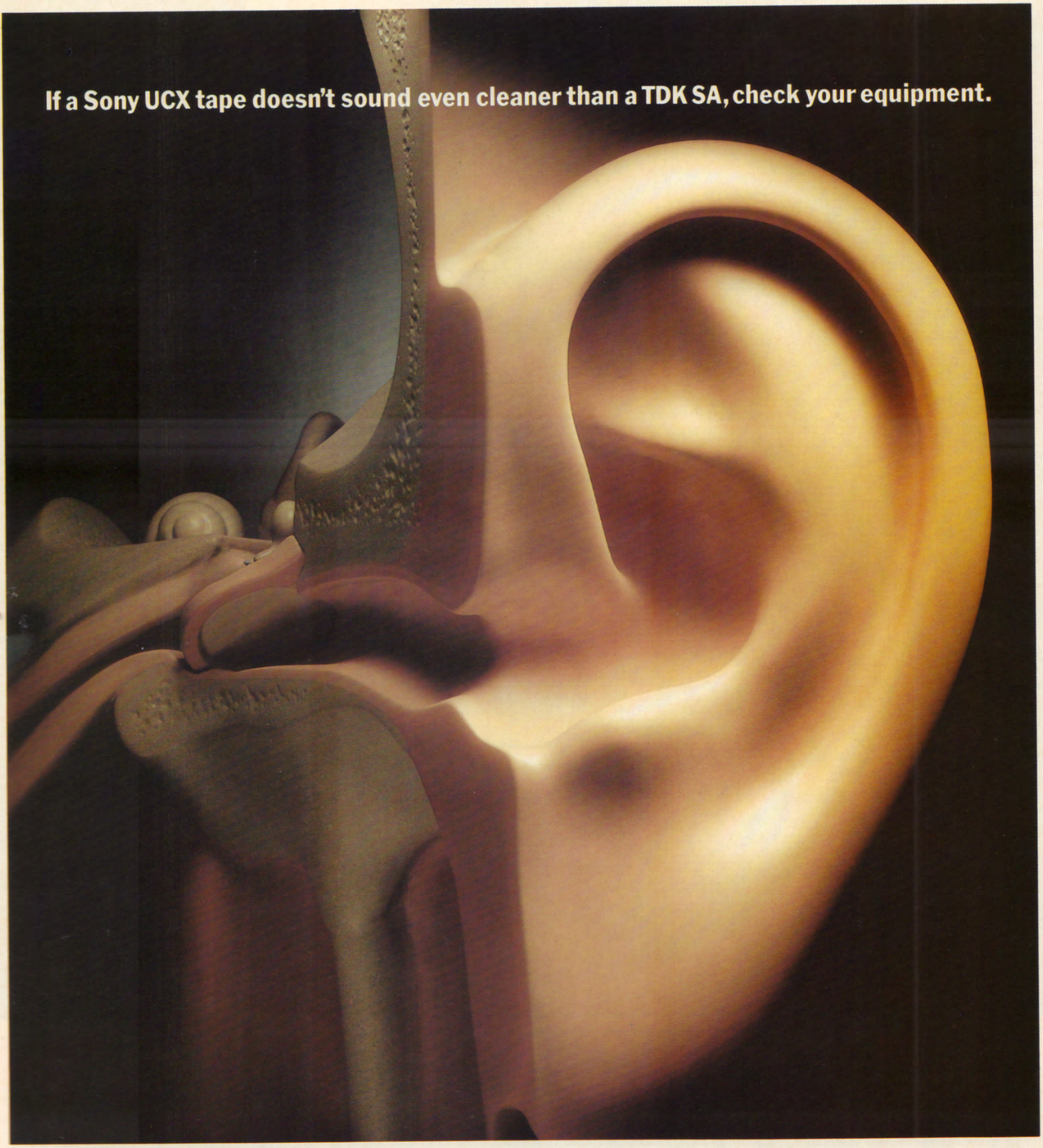
Namita Gokhale, also twenty-eight, of Lucknow on the Indian subcontinent, is also delivered of her first novel this month. **Paro: Dreams of Passion** *(Pavanne, £1.75)* is an intrigue, related to the intrigues of Jackie Collins, Shirley Conran. Her people, the idle bourgeois of New Delhi, bear approximately the same relationship with Indian culture as Collins' Hollywood Wives have with *our* culture – displaced, affluent and ultimately meaningless people exercising their 'privileges' in public for our titillation. The cultural crossover potential of this sort of thing is pretty untested – I'll watch Paro's fate on the bookstands with interest.

Not the first: **A Curious Street** by Desmond Hogan *(Picador, £2.50)* is an accomplished, convoluted and extremely addictive stride up and down Irish history, visiting the crucial junctures of Ireland's past, witnessing the horrific atrocities visited upon her by the British, and told in language borrowed partly from Joycean prose and partly from the Imagist poets. It's an unusual and thoroughly stylised book, not really for newcomers to this reading lark – it's an enchanted maze. Very impressive, and strongly recommended.

Everyman Fiction give us two firsts: **Interzone: the First Anthology** *(3.95)* and J. G. Ballard's **Vermilion Sands** *(2.95)*. The Interzone anthology makes available some of the more prestigious and repeatable SF stories from Interzone magazine, which is about the only magazine publishing quality SF in this country at the moment. The team here is a strong one. J. G. Ballard, Angela Carter, Rachel Pollack and . . . Many More! In case there are still some bimbos in the audience who persist in the opinion that SF doesn't qualify as literature, this book should convince them – finally – otherwise. Vermilion Sands is published here for, I believe, the first time in paperback. Another future, a self-enclosed suburban idyll where history has just about ground to a halt. But life still has its trials and tribulations, here and there. The question that now nags, though, fifteen years after the novel was written, is just how do we reach the Vermilion Sands, the global holiday resort, from here on Airstrip One...

And finally, **Roman, by Polanski** is now in paperback *(Pan, £2.95)*. What relationship this autobiography has to The Facts I really couldn't say – I wasn't there. Does anyone do as Roman does? (Sorry – it was too good a crack to miss!) But this is an elegant work. If it *is* truth, it is intimate, brave truth. If it is fabrication, it is artful and expertly-told fabrication. It's a reasonable read, and it will be read widely. It's a worthy effort, told by a consummate yarn-spinner.

That little lot should keep you going till next month – you shouldn't have to resort to nasty old rock books any more...


If a Sony UCX tape doesn't sound even cleaner than a TDK SA, check your equipment.

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PHYLLIS LOGAN

●Words by Paul Mathur
●Photograph by Julian Simmonds

●**As** *A Passage To India* booms out predictably as an example of What British Film Is All About, spare a thought for the quieter and far more worthwhile examples of the craft. Whilst perhaps not demanding a reputation quite as vociferously as yet another film about thrills and, albeit ethereal, spills in some far flung land that once was The Empire, it's the likes of James Scott's *Every Picture Tells A Story* that actually deserve your time and money.

Telling the tale of Scott's father William, an artist who is only now really getting the recognition he deserves, it succeeds, without screaming, at conveying the formative years of the subject's development from an eight year-old drawing fish on the kitchen table to that moment in art school when his career 'officially' started.

At the heart of the film is William's mother, suffering the hardships of raising ten children and flitting with them from Scotland to Ireland in pursuit of a homesick husband. She is played with subdued strength by Phyllis Logan, who I believe is what is known as A Bright New Talent. It's only her third film and already she's got a subtitle. 'The New....' (Insert star of your choice.)

Actually, filling that gap is rather a difficult business, since her performances to date, whilst stunning, have failed to nestle, as critics would like them to, into an expected predictability.

"I have played rather too many wife figures come to think of it – I'm even a wife in the new one!"

In a Muswell Hill flat, a world away from her Paisley home, Phyllis is preparing for the "new one", a film adaptation of a Dylan Thomas short story called *The Doctor And The Devils*, starring amongst others Jonathan Pryce, and apparently set to be huge. A Burke and Hare tale of dark doings directed by an ex-Hammer Horror man, it seems rather different from *Every Picture Tells A Story.*

"Well hopefully it is going to be. I've hardly got a vital role, but it should give me a chance to play more than just A Scots Woman."

The Scottish roots are showing, and the detachment from London's dizzy world is important. Coming away from the Scottish Academy Of Music And Drama with the obviously coveted James Bridie Gold Medal in 1977, she decided to stay in Scotland and joined Dundee Rep.

"It was an important move for me because it taught me so much. I know it sounds a bit like *Good Companions,* but at the time I was quite happy to just have a job; I didn't have any other aspirations. We did all the reppy stuff, the farces and the musicals, and the Dundonians lapped them up. It was quite bizarre – I remember that in *The Taming Of The Shrew* I spent the whole time playing a variety of manservants!"

Perversely it was after her move to London that she was offered her film debut in *Another time, Another Place* as a Scottish housewife in the Highlands during the war. As well as consisting of a lot of seminal staring-into-the-wind-in-the-middle-distance shots, the film provided Phyllis with the meatiest of roles, revolving entirely around her anguished portrayal of frustrated desire and Scottish cultural constraints.

Were all the awards that the thing picked up expected?

"They never are. I thought it was perhaps a bit slow for people to get into but maybe it was that difference of pace that appealed to viewers. It certainly wasn't *Beverly Hills Cop* or anything!"

It was at the BAFTA award ceremony when she was voted Best Newcomer that her next role popped up.

"A woman called Eva Sereny was there and she couldn't believe how different I looked in real life from the role in the film. Honestly, was she expecting me to turn up in my pinny and wellies or something?! Anyway, she thought I'd be right for this film she was making called *The Dress,* in which a dress transforms a dowdy housewife."

The film, a short, got round the country with the aforementioned *Beverly Hills Cop* and as if by divine intervention, the night my interview with her took place it was voted Best Short Film Of The Year at the BAFTA awards. Don't let anyone persuade you BLITZ hasn't got its finger on the pulse, kids! !

With all these awards and the undoubted excellence of *Every Picture,* what now? Is the stage still beckoning?

"Well, there's a TV play I did a year and a half ago called *Off Peak* about a group of rotarians at their annual weekend in Peebles, but goodness knows when it will actually be shown. Apart from that I'm not so keen on TV work at the moment. The physical process is rather too constrictive for my liking. I'd much rather do film or stage work."

In the West End?

"I don't know. That mixture of very long runs and largely rubbishy content that constitutes most of the plays in the West End holds no appeal at all. I'd like to be whisked off somewhere to do a film and have to live in a hotel for about six weeks, that'd be ideal!"

Do you hanker for your Scottish roots?

"Fortunately I'm not really away from them, because I go home all the time. It's always nice to get back to a bit of reality; I'm sure I'd lose all sense of perspective if I was here all the time. It's nice to go home and have a good gossip about the neighbours!"

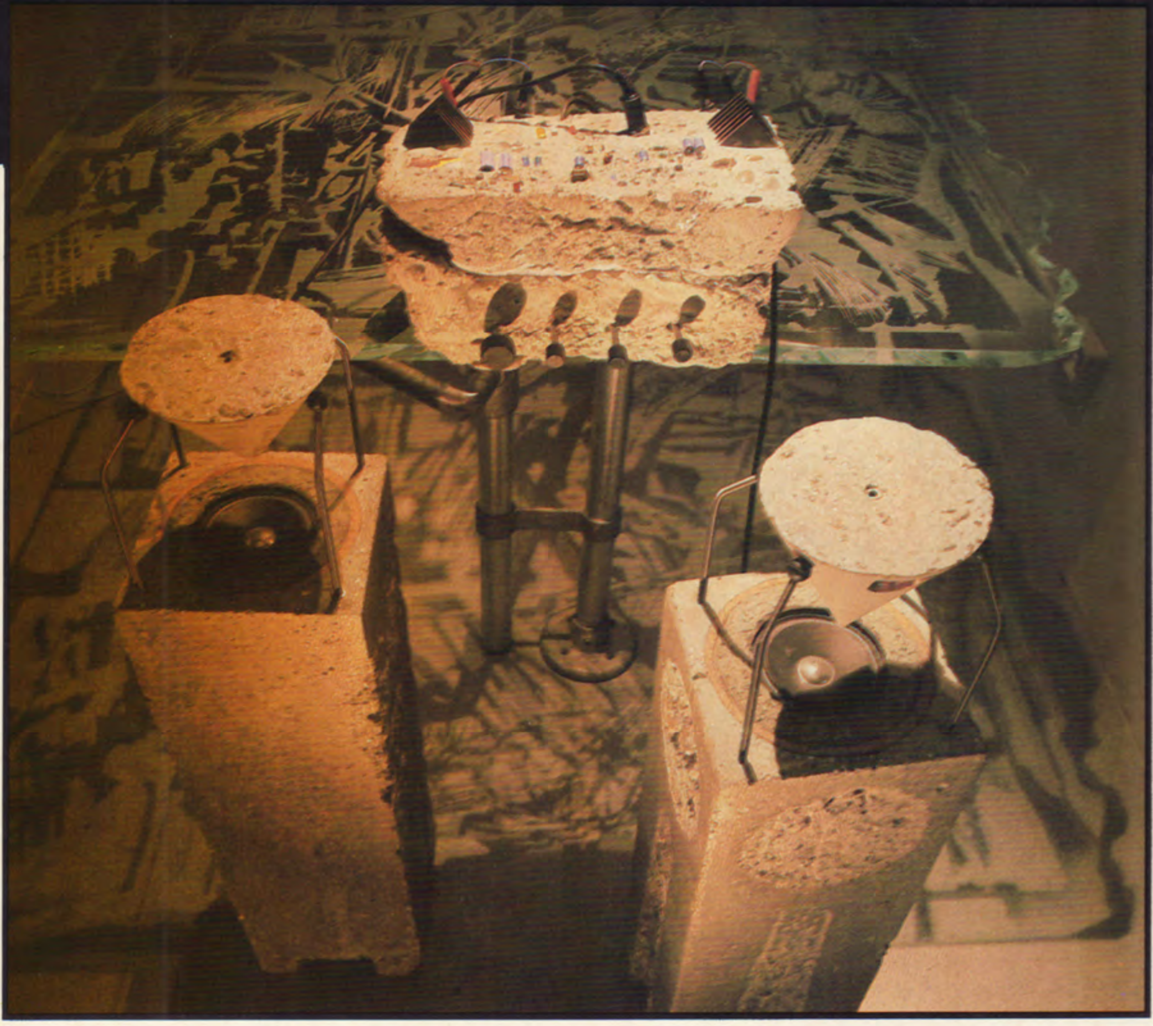
SHEFFIELD, THE CITY THAT LAUNCHED A THOUSAND HIPS, IS SENDING OUT A BECKONING CRY. THE WORD ON ITS LIPS IS

'YOU/
THEY SAY'
ESCAPES
ON
MARCH 14TH

CHAKK

4 fon 5

ON SEPTEMBER 22ND, 1984, CABARET VOLTAIRE'S DOUBLEVISION LABEL LICENCED A TWELVE ONLY RELEASE OF 'OUT OF THE FLESH', CHAKK'S FIRST RECORDED MOMENT. "CHAKK RELEASE A BRILLIANT DEBUT SINGLE, A FUNK-BASS DRIVEN MONSTER." TWENTY WEEKS LATER, WITH THE LAST SINGLE STILL FEATURING IN THE INDEPENDENT AND DANCE CHARTS, THE FON PARTNERSHIP RELEASE A SERIES OF TWELVES AND SEVENS BY CHAKK. NUMBER ONE IN THE SERIES IS DOUBLE-HEADED TWELVE 'YOU/THEY SAY' IN FOUR DIFFERENT EDITIONS. NUMBER TWO IS A LIMITED COMPRESSED SEVEN OF SAID TRACKS. NUMBER THREE IS GETTING CLOSER BY THE SECOND.



ONE OFF

●**Ron Arad** has given new meaning to the phrase 'Rock Music' – his One Off designer shop has built the world's first concrete Hi-fi. All of the electronics are set in irregular concrete and pebble blocks, moulded to fit together, with metal fins to take away heat and some components poking through the surface.

"We think that electronic design went really stale years ago," says Arad. Together with electronics engineer Pete Kean he is combining primitive and modern design with post-modern abandon. Already they have built an automatic-telescope light on the end of a car aerial, 'singing stairs' which wail at the slightest vibration and a family of objects which make sounds as the intensity of light is changed.

Unveiled at slick London shops Joseph pour la maison and Paul Smith,

S A W

the concrete hi-fi will be produced in a commercial run, perhaps making a hundred unique variations which, if hardly mass production, are certainly intended to catch the attention of major suppliers. "We can't compete with Sharp or Sony: we're not so Sharp, not so Sony," he says.

Why concrete? "This looks like an object that was washed up from the sea. The thing is, to do something new in household hi-fi... you have to forget what's already there, to do a complete U-turn.

"In the Fifties everything was furniturized – Radiograms, for instance. You had the record player with its four legs splayed out at an angle. It had an inlay of veneer with a shape that they thought was modern. Then such goods became extremely exaggerated – long and thin, short and fat.

"Then they thought that everything should look like machines, like Army communication equipment. It had to have a lot of lights and buttons and be very scientific". It is, he says, a not surprising if illogical next step to dip a hi-fi in concrete. Music buffs already sing the praises of concrete hi-fi. Surprisingly, concrete reduces vibration and can improve the sound quality.

If One Off want to shock, which they do, then they have succeeded. This hi-fi will be available as a batch produced run, with perhaps a hundred being made. Arad can see the day when Sony, Sharp and the other mass producers look to him for inspiration. "The Japanese are very inventive; they take Western ideas and do them better. If they got hold of this idea, who knows what they could do...". Who indeed?

Paul Walton

HOWARD KINGS NORTH

Ron Arad

J

TONY DOYLE

Words by Mark Brennan
Photography by Richard Croft

●In 1980, in the lead-up to the Moscow Olympics, Tony Doyle was acknowledged as Britain's Number One pursuit cyclist. Unbeaten by any of his peers, he was not surprisingly selected for both the team and individual pursuit.

"While we were out there, the national coach wasn't sure whether it would be me or another rider for the individual. This other chap had never beaten me. So three days before the actual competition the team director said we were going to have a ride-off over the full distance, which is ludicrous."

Ludicrous or not, at 8am in a deserted stadium he didn't just beat his adversary, he recorded in the process the fastest time ever by a British rider. While he was still contemplating what colour medal would shortly be adorning his tracksuit atop the podium, it was announced, unbelievably and inexplicably, that Tony Doyle would not be representing his country in the individual pursuit. On his return to England, he turned professional and three weeks later, in France, he won himself the title of World Pursuit Champion. Actions, as they say, speak louder than words...

Sitting in the Doyle living room eyeing an impressive collection of trophies and certificates, I was keen to observe first-hand what effects 30,000 miles per year on a bicycle can have on an average thigh. I was too shy to ask, of course, but there wasn't even an all-revealing Groucho Marx gait. Nothing, in fact, to support the distinguished framed certificate decorating the wall which declares Tony a 'Champion du Monde'. Apart from the handlebars on the back seat of his car, maybe.

They're expensive handlebars, too. The machines Tony Doyle wraps himself around daily are finely customised and can cost up to £4,000. I hardly need add that he goes through more of those in a season than I will squash rackets in a decade. Forehand boast and all. It's a long way, however, from the early part of the century when this

country pioneered the sport of cycling, only to be overtaken by other European countries because we were denied the necessary co-operation of local authorities and police to stage road races.

"In France, Belgium, Holland and Italy it's very big now; comparable to football over here even, it has that big a following. The Tour de France is *the* biggest sporting spectacle, watched by more people than anything else. Everything is stopped and re-routed for it; plane times, train times, buses, everything is geared around the race, it's got that much pull. It finishes in the centre of Paris and two million people come out on the street to watch it."

We're some way from establishing that mass appeal here, apparently, and yet cycling is growing in popularity and attracting new sponsors all the time. With an eloquent and passionate disciple of the sport such as Tony, and a PR company, Sports Plus, promoting cycling full-time, that's hardly surprising. Lately, the interest of that stoical champion of minority sports, Channel 4, has been prodded. In 1984 the station covered a series of city centre road races with noteworthy success.

"City centre races are our speciality in Britain. We couldn't do the long distance road races because we still don't get one hundred per cent co-operation from the police. And anyway, unless you're an enthusiast it doesn't mean much. If we're racing one hundred and fifty miles and you turn out to watch it, we whizz past you in a minute. If you're keen you don't mind standing out in the freezing cold, but otherwise you'll wonder what all the fuss is about. But if, in a city centre race, the riders are coming round every minute at over thirty miles per hour it has more of the attraction of a Grand Prix. By making it short, snappy and entertaining, and taking the racing to them, the public will lap it up. We get thirty to forty thousand attending and a couple of million TV viewers. It's getting bigger and better all the time."

A significant portion of Tony's racing calendar is given over to the gruelling, tortuous six-day events which prove such crowd-pullers around the indoor stadiums of Europe. Part of the allure is not unlike that which attended the American dance marathons of the Depression era.

"You live and sleep and eat like a mole underground, finishing at maybe two-thirty in the morning during the week, and four-thirty on week-ends. On the continent they all stay to the end. I won the six-day of Bremen in January this year and one hundred and sixty thousand people turned out over the six days. Sometimes we don't even see daylight. There could be bubonic plague going on outside and you wouldn't know."

This level of self-abuse accounts for his chief non-cycling occupation – sleep. In his waking hours, however, Tony Doyle is still accumulating trophies and medals. He yearns for the opportunity to regain his world title in front of a home crowd. Quite apart from his own abilities, that will depend on whether the promoters can be lured to Wembley or the NEC. And ultimately, reader, that depends on you. ●

Flex and Shaftesbury's are pleased to invite you to a Fun & Fashion Evening at Shaftesbury's Discotheque on April 3rd, 1985 from: 9pm to 3am.

Flex, the forum for young British fashion, will be showing the latest and most exciting items from its Spring Collection at Midnight.

You will have a chance to win one of the featured outfits, as well as selected items from the Levi's, Jekyll & Hyde, Air Balloon, & Spens, David Johnson, Hudson & Hudson, Juniors, and other ranges on show at Flex.

Shaftesbury's is London's newest and most exciting discotheque, featuring D.J.'s Elaine Jane and Terry Adams, plus a host of spectacular acts.

If you have not already collected the free invitations available with purchases at Flex from 28th March bring this advert along on the evening: you will benefit from half-price admission for two people.

See you on the 3rd of April at

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SUBWAY RIDERS

The arrest and subsequent acquittal of Bernhard Goetz for the shooting of four alleged muggers in the New York subway system has caused a massive renewal of interest in the idea of citizen crimefighters. The Guardian Angels, New York's first citizens' crime patrol, support for whom has waned considerably over the past few years, hope that some of that interest might rub off on them.

● Words and photographs by Hugh Morley.

"IT'S LIKE a scene out of a Kung Fu movie. Punches, kicks, bodies flying in all directions. A man pulls out a shotgun, pumps it and aims it at the woman on the ground. He's ready to blast her..."

Curtis Sliwa pauses mid-flow to emphasise the gravity of the situation. It is his favourite story; I know because I read it word for word in a copy of the Vancouver Sun dated April 1981. A hundred times or more he must have told it. By now I bet even Sliwa himself can't remember how much is true, but it's a crucial part of Angels folklore: Curtis Sliwa Rescues Woman From Jaws Of Death. It ends with him narrowly escaping extinction himself, saved by a pile of garbage on the ground. I search his face for some humour, some trace of tongue-in-cheek perhaps. But no, he takes himself very seriously. Poker-faced he continues.

"...So I throw a spinning hook kick and knock the gun out of his hands. He falls straight down the stairs but I'm like a high hurdler now, try to catch myself, no good. Thirty-five foot, I go straight down, head first...."

THE FOUNDER of the Guardian Angels, Curtis Sliwa has been running over the high points in the Angels history in their tatty headquarters above the Amsterdam News in Harlem. The walls are chipped and bare but for the 'stars and stripes' draped from ceiling to floor over one side and the randomly distributed news stories concerning the group pinned to another.

Now hitting something of a trough in membership, Sliwa is as willing as ever to extol the virtues of New York's only citizens' crimefighting organisation. After six years the Guardian Angels claim activity in fifty-five American and four Canadian cities, patrolling anything from subways to buses to housing estates and more. An extensive lecture tour of Europe in 1983 by the Angels led to speculation that the group may start up in England, concentrating on patrolling housing estates, but this has yet to come to fruition. Last year in the States alone they leant their weight to protecting the Olympics, the Democratic convention and its Republican counterpart and to controlling the crowds in Times Square as the New Year dawned.

Claiming a membership of 5,000 around the country, the Angels have 528 names registered with the New York police, a drop from a peak of up to a thousand in the early eighties. They attribute the decline in part to harassment from the police but mainly to the death of two Angels shot on patrol: the first shot by police in Newark at the scene of a robbery; the second in the Bronx by a man crazed on angel dust while a patrol searched for a missing woman. "Overnight we lost about three hundred members," says Sliwa.

Under his shrewd guidance, a combination of his determined articulacy and a strong tactical sense with the media, the Guardian Angels have survived on donations and lecture fees and weathered the opposition: 'taking it to the people' and even utilizing 'civil disobedience' where necessary. Among their more noted actions were a march to Washington by two hundred Angels to protest the Newark killing, and the time when they lay down on the subway tracks in Times Square to draw attention to the city's refusal to grant them free travel on the trains.

"But the key," declaims Sliwa, winding up his extensive resumé, "is that we've stayed true to our concept. There are no salaried workers and we accept headquarters from people who voluntarily give them to us. In some cases they are nice, in others," he gestures around the room, "not so nice. The whole business is that we will not accept any money from corporations because we don't want our existence based on whether they decide to give us the green, or not give us the green. And this is what bothers the authorities, there is no way of controlling us."

DESPISED BY all but those forced to use it regularly, the New York subway system is a wretched decaying monument to public ownership in a city characterised by the clutching fingers of the bums as they plead for money. Twenty-four hours a day, three hundred and sixty five days a year, it never stops. After thirty years of neglect the subway is infamous for the filth, slime and grime of its stations and its stinking, graffiti-ridden carriages; but most of all for the 12,000-odd muggings that take place within its boundaries every year. "They should pay *YOU* ninety cents to go down there," comments Sliwa. Once a well-heeled middle-class kid, he says he was "introduced to the real world fast" on the subways. "Every time the doors open you feel like you need to wear rubber underwear," he quips humourlessly.

Prior to our meeting he suggests I tag along with the Angels to check out what they do. I arrive at Grand Central Station as they line up in front of a neat row of payphones, their main form of communication. The patrol leader frisks each member for weapons and checks their wallets for razor blades. They all look about seventeen, freshfaced and mainly Hispanic, fitting the image not so much of the New York street gangs as of a group of boy scouts. The minimum age is sixteen and all are screened for any record of sexual offences or crime involving a weapon, though lesser offences are deemed admissable. "How else are you going to attract somebody who otherwise may have turned out real bad?" reasons Sliwa.

As we move off to the platform they hold a loose, disciplined line, enter the last carriage and spread out along the train as it rattles down the track. At each stop the doors slide open and the Angels drop to one knee, poke their heads out and peer down the platform. If a head fails to appear they assume there's a problem, hold the train and investigate. Though based on the concept of citizen's arrest, the policy is more directed towards providing a group deterrent. "We're not sending people out individually," explains Sliwa later. "If that were the case we'd be knee-deep in lawsuits and there'd be a lot of Guardian Angels locked up for having taken the law into their own hands."

As we move through the city – first uptown to Intervale in the Bronx, a barely-lit open-air platform suspended thirty feet up, then a change of trains back down to the subterranean confines of Chambers Street and then another change up to Times Square – the ride is uneventful but for the regularity with which we board to find the last carriage inevitably in darkness, empty but for a surly gang of youths fooling around and heavily stoned, the air thick with smoke.

The red berets and white T-shirts of the Angels attract a stream of well-wishers who stop for a chat, shout across the platform or simply shake hands and say, "Like what you're doing man, keep it up!" After six years they have a high profile in the city and initial fears among the mainly black and hispanic subway riders that the Angels would turn out to be just another, albeit part-legitimised, gang have long since disappeared.

Curtis Sliwa himself is continually stopped and questioned. Ten days before, Hugo Bernhard Goetz had indelibly etched his name in history by gunning down four black youths allegedly harassing him on the downtown IRT train, provoking massive support for this so-called 'subway vigilante'. As we travel uptown, three black youths approach and demand an answer from Sliwa to a column in the morning's Daily News asking 'Where do the Angels fit in?' after Sliwa had spoken out in favour of Goetz, and the Angels had collected money for his defence. For fifteen minutes Sliwa talks to the three, defending Goetz' actions as those of a man driven to desperation. He talks in a tone of perpetual indignation, outrage even, like some fire and brimstone preacher from the South. The three bend to his point of view, clearly impressed by his apparent authority.

We dismount and head through the barren ▶

curtis sliwa

The Guardian Angel himself – Curtis Sliwa

The Angels on patrol

wastes of Harlem, an almost eerie feeling rising inside as we stride through the decaying streets of the white-man's 'no go area' in the dead of night, without fear of harassment. As we head into a McDonalds restaurant the discussion starts again with another five black youths. "Suppose it was a black guy who shot them and the four brothers had been white, that'd be different, huh?" they argue.

"How else is he going to get justice?" Sliwa asks, pointing to the fact that if you're mugged on the subway no-one is going to help, and even if the four were arrested, the chances are they would be able to plea bargain it away and get straight back on the street. "Eighteen previous occasions between them they"ve been arrested and charged, and not one of them has done a day in jail," says Sliwa with disgust, the details instantly at his fingertips. "Most people have given up reporting crime because it's a waste of time, you get no justice. It seems there's justice for the criminal but not for the victim..."

CURTIS SLIWA was born and brought up in the Canarsie area of Brooklyn, a white middle-class area of mainly Jews and Italians. He attended a prestigious Jesuit high school and had a regular American upbringing: "little league baseball, football, piano lessons, and martial arts classes". At the age of sixteen he rescued three people from a burning house whilst doing a paper round and later in the same year was presented with a plaque for Paperboy of the Year by President Richard M. Nixon.

On leaving school he took a job as manager in a gas station, then as a supermarket packer, and finally as a night manager in a McDonalds restaurant in the Bronx. It was while working here that the idea of a citizens' safety patrol evolved in his mind in response to the general level of crime in the city, but more specifically the crime on the Number Four train, the 'Muggers' Express', which ran past the McDonalds down through Manhattan and into Brooklyn.

"In 1979 the Number Four train was the worst of the many bad subway lines in the city," explains Sliwa. "A police officer had been shot and killed, people had been thrown in front of trains, set on fire, raped, beaten and savaged. There was a total of six murders on that train just in the Bronx. So it was definitely out of control."

His initial response was to set himself up as a target on the last carriage of the train, that most favoured by the muggers for its relative isolation. As soon as anyone approached him he would press a buzzer and his accomplice, "a six-foot chinaman of three hundred and twenty pounds who looked like a sumo wrestler", would come dashing in from the next carriage. "Half the time the muggers would start crying and give up just from the sight of the guy", says Sliwa. "The other times we would have to clobber them down until the police arrived."

His next step was to form the Guardian Angels, or the Magnificent 13 as they were initially named. Their first patrol took place on Friday February the 13th 1979 amid cries of protest and accusations of 'vigilanteism' from the mayor and police authorities whom Sliwa had politely informed of his intended activities, ensuring impressive media coverage. Within six months the number of Angels had risen to 38 and, claims Sliwa, they were credited with stopping a rape, a suicide and two armed robberies.

By 1981 the Angels had branched into nearby Newark and, with the murder of twenty-two black children by a homicidal maniac in Atlanta, they sent down a party to help patrol the most seriously threatened areas. The party was led by Lisa Evers, Curtis Sliwa's second-in-command, and the two made headlines later the same year when they married and spent their honeymoon patrolling a St Louis low income housing estate.

Since their initial break from New York the Angels have spread across the country, variously despised, denounced and welcomed with open arms. "It depends on the city," explains Lisa Sliwa. "You could take a city like Syracuse where the Guardian Angels trained in the police headquarters, where they received identification cards from the police and where the police conducted the training. On the other hand you could take Newark, New Jersey, where every cop in the street hassles the patrols and where a Guardian Angel was murdered by a police officer in December of 1981."

In May 1982 the Guardian Angels signed an official agreement with the city of New York that went half way to recognising them. The relationship is strained however, soured by the initial salvoes fired by the authorities at the Angels' inception, and Curtis Sliwa's continual badmouthing of the mayor, the police, and the city for their neglect of not only the subways but also the homeless, the minorities and the poor in general. "The best place to find a cop on the subway," explains Sliwa in almost mock confidentiality at one point, "is to find the coffee and donut stand. All that increasing the number of cops has done is that instead of one cop at the coffee stand, you now have two. I think to an extent the reason many police don't like us is because our presence is forcing them to do their job."

ON THE OTHER side of the coin lies Bill McKenzie, the president of the New York City transit police union and a long time adversary of the Angels, who ironically attended the same school as Curtis Sliwa (though some years earlier). He points to the increase in subway crime over the last few years as proof of the Angels' failure to make an impact, refutes Sliwa's claim of five hundred members and notes that while they claim credit for 498 arrests across the country, the New York police department can only confirm twenty.

"They have been more of a hindrance than a help," says McKenzie, and pulls out a thick manilla folder of charge sheets with 'Guardian Angels' written on the front. "These are all incidents, official reports where Guardian Angels have been arrested for various violations on the subway". Sliwa admits that over two hundred arrests have been made on 'minor violations' but sees them as examples of police harassment, claiming that none has led to a conviction.

As far as McKenzie is concerned, Curtis Sliwa has something to hide. Money perhaps. He points to the Angels' tax free status as a non-profit making organisation and the $30,000 Sliwa made sueing CBS Television over the film *We're Fighting Back*, based around the Angels, but made without his permission. "There's money in it anyway", claims McKenzie. "My theory – and I could be wrong – is that dog bites man doesn't sell any papers, but man bites dog does. When the cameras are there, the Angels are there. When they aren't, nor are the Angels. All they are is a creation *of* the media, *for* the media. And Curtis knows how to use the media."

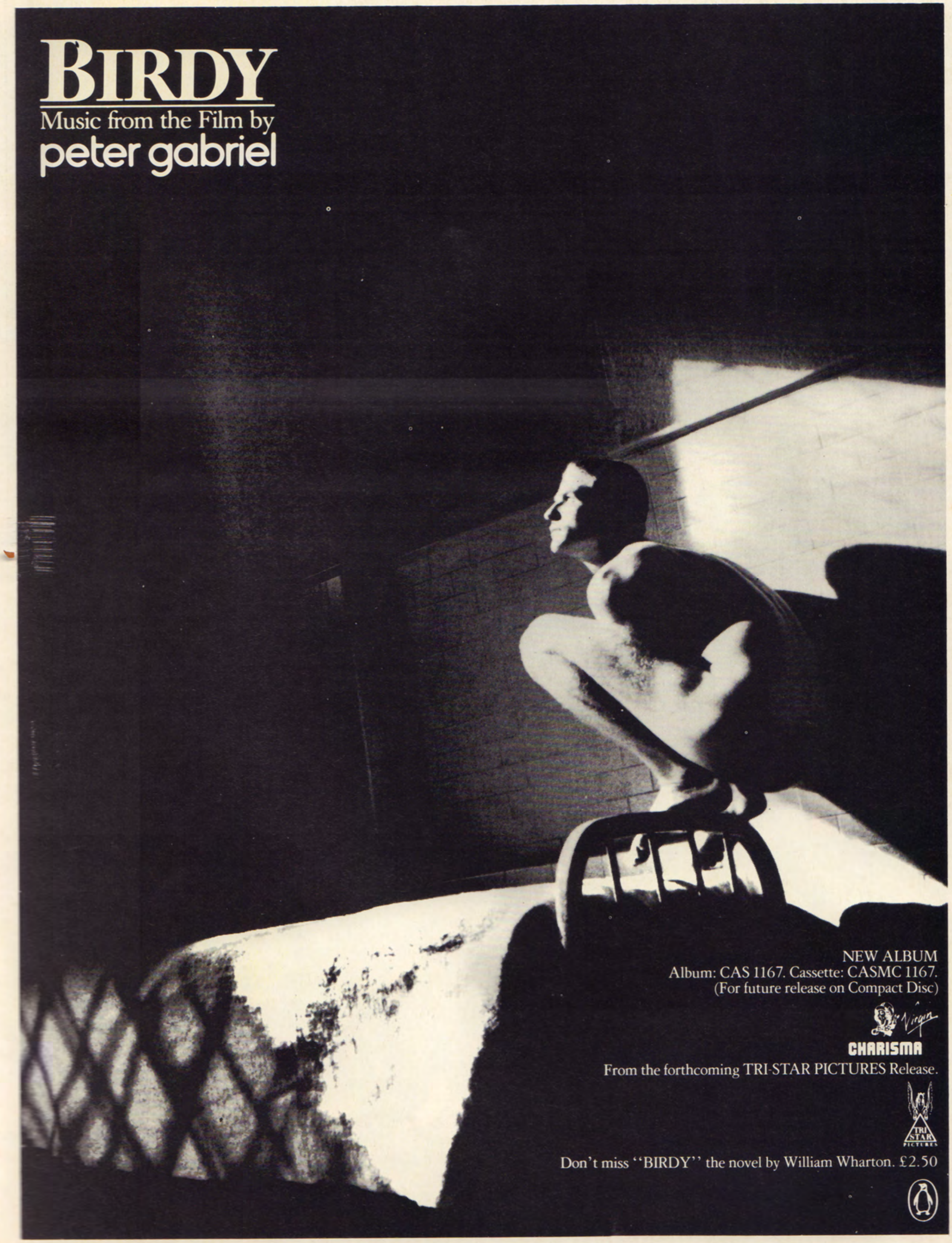
But aside from money the lack of obvious motivation behind the Angels leaves many of the numerous related newspaper articles in the States wrestling with the problem 'What is Curtis Sliwa up to?' In six years Sliwa has built up a kind of aura in the media akin to that of a minor film star, albeit more low key and 'street', though he admits that publicity is getting harder to come by. His marriage to Lisa Evers – the coupling of the two crimefighters – provided an extra dimension, and more fuel was added to the fire last year when she began modelling: 'The Double Life of Lisa Sliwa' screamed the headlines, though in some areas it only served to confirm that the Sliwas had more on their minds than crime.

Maybe at the heart of it is the fact that Curtis Sliwa is an apparent hero in a country that needs heroes, a man who speaks his mind, stands up to authority and puts his body behind the principles of law and order, and justice for the little guy. The way he sees it, it's a return to the old values – a kid in the ghetto can become a Guardian Angel and retain his self-esteem in the face of poverty, without going out and blowing someone away. Or maybe it's just that if you're riding the subway late at night with a crew of red berets strung out along the train, you know you're a damn sight safer.

AS THE EARLY hours draw in around Harlem, Curtis Sliwa is growing hoarse after three hours talking. Very little remains to be said. So how about the accusations then, Curtis? Media muppet or Superman?

"People say to me, 'Publicity freak? Media maniac?' but I don't even argue with them. I just say, 'I'm guilty. Lock me up and throw away the key'. But in that jail you're going to have to also put all the politicians, the sports stars, the rock stars, the business people... People spend millions of dollars trying to develop artificial publicity about a group, but we're only publicising what we actually do.

"We've been doing this for six years. Everyone thinks I'm going to run for office. 'You going to do this? You going to make a movie? You going to do that?' But that hasn't happened. If I said, 'Yeah, I *want* to run for politics. I *want* to be a congressman. I *want* to make as much money as I can, live in a big house with maids, butlers, servants and a limousine....' then people would say, 'Thank God!' ", Sliwa smacks the table with his fist, " 'HE'S AN AMERICAN!' " ●



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FUNNY PECULIAR

julie walters

- **Words by Tim Hulse.**
- **Photographs by Johnny Rosza.**

"I'M READING Patricia Highsmith at the moment. They're really brilliant books, *my god* they're fantastic. Read them. They're absolutely brilliant, honestly. Read *The Talented Mister Ripley*. They're thrillers, but they're not thrillers actually. It's very difficult to put her into a bracket because they're sort of, she gets right at... The Talented Mister Ripley is this man who actually commits these murders... well I'll tell you about another one..."

Deep in the bowels of the Lyric Theatre in London's West End, in Dressing Room Number One, Mad Julie is getting intense. Sitting upright on a bed in a corner of the room, she's staring towards a distant point somewhere beyond the angle of the ceiling and the far wall. A kind of anguish is spreading across her face and the words are coming quicker and quicker...

"... There's one called *The Sweet Sickness* and it's about this man who's obsessed, um, with this woman, he's in love with her, but *you* don't realise he's obsessed, all his emotions to begin with, the way they're sort of laid out in the book, appear to be very normal and you're right in there with him side by side, you know, and you get really, you get really *inside* the character and he appers to be, he is explaining all his emotions and he's um he's er er er, his actions all the way through the book, they're quite sort of normal but occasionally they just go over the edge a little bit and you think oooh hang on a minute what's go... what's going..."

Her fists are clenched tight and her chin is on her knees. Her face is screwed up like she's in pain. She's still going, even quicker now...

"... So you're kind of taken along on this awful journey and you suddenly realise that actually this man is completely, he's actually unbalanced and it's actually quite frightening and you're actually going along with him and you can see what he's... it's like having it explained to you while somebody's murdering something uh somebody and actually feeling oh well actually it's fine what he's doing, god I hope he gets away with it, he mustn't be punished for this, *do you know what I mean*...?

She looks towards me. The moment's passed and she's smiling...

"... You take on someone else's logic, you get locked inside this peculiar logic and it's really peculiar and strange and... wonderful."

THE PECULIAR, strange and... wonderful Julie Walters, aged 35, actress, all round good laugh, funny voices to order, is wearing a chunky blue sweater and khaki trousers. Her dressing room looks like all the ones you've seen in the movies. Almost depressingly stark and bare, it's dominated by a long mirror surrounded by bright, bare bulbs (you know the ones). All around it and stuck all over it are countless cards from friends and fans – Julie's birthday had taken place only a few days before, which also explains the single balloon and a few streamers hanging rather sadly from a light fitting in the middle of the ceiling. It's all pretty tacky, but if you had to spend as many hours in there as she does, you'd probably call it homely...

And it's down here, amidst these rather gloomy surroundings, that Julie prepares each evening for the role of May in Sam Shepard's emotional bloodbath *Fool For Love*. After a successful run at the National, the play has transferred to the West End for eight weeks until the end of March. Any remaining seats are, let us say, few and far between.

Fool For Love marks another personal triumph for her in a career which has been consistently upwardly mobile ever since she packed in student nursing for drama school. Since her very first professional engagement (a pub tour for the Liverpool Everyman), she has been in work constantly and the only 'resting' she has done has been purely voluntary. "Yes, that's true," she agrees. "Ooh... oh god, what a thing to say." And she looks round desperately for a piece of wood to touch.

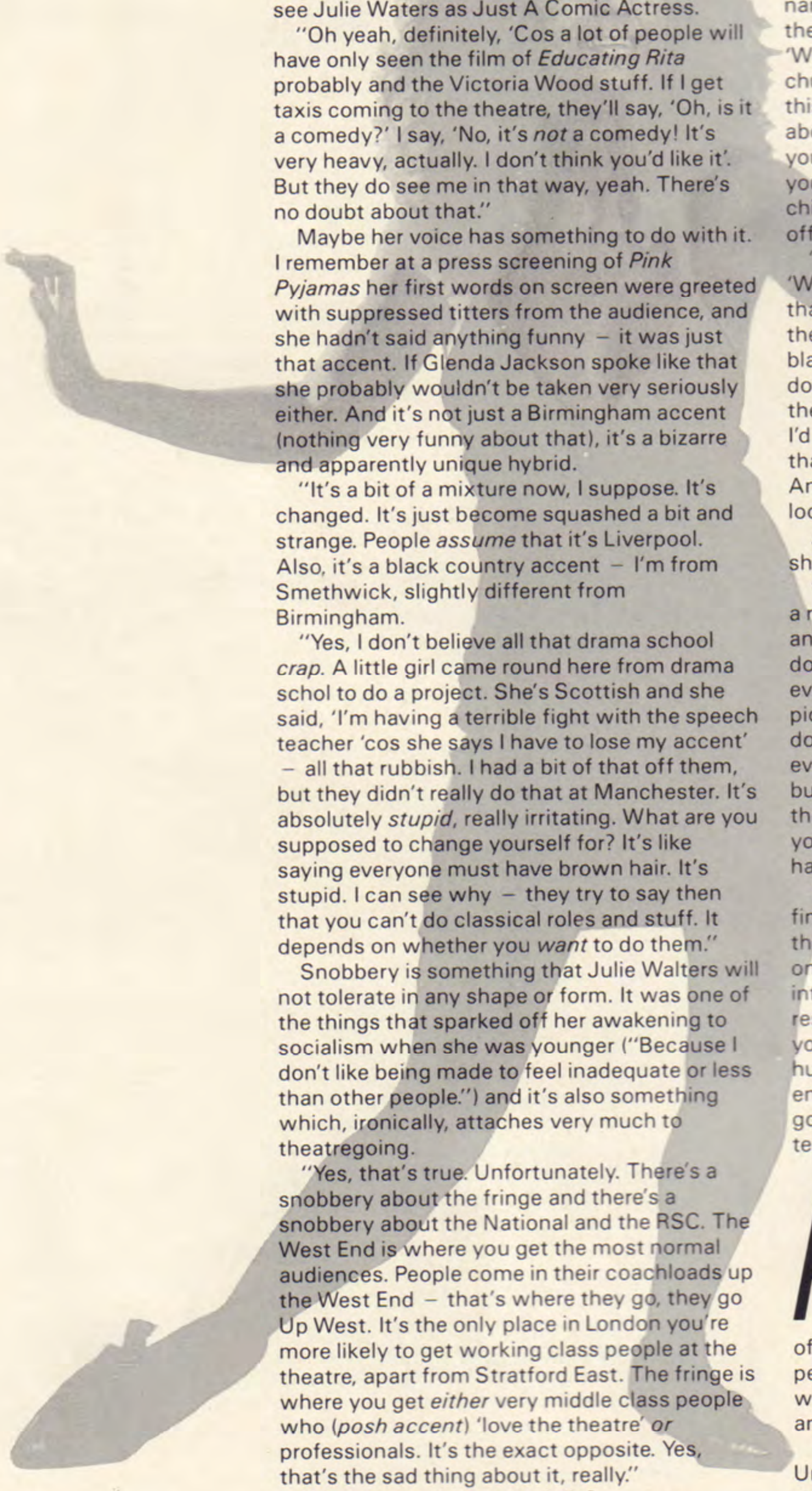
AFTER *Educating Rita*, Julie Walters could have cleaned up. All of a sudden, Hollywood's fruit machines rang up 'Star Quality' and large men with cigars couldn't wait to offer her the jackpot. Scripts started to arrive:

"I didn't want to do any of them. They're still sending the same scripts that were being done in the seventies, all things like Glenda Jackson and George Segal did, that sort of stuff – you know, 'That worked before, so we'll do it again'. And their *ideas* are very peculiar. They get you and they say, 'What sort of profession would you like to play?' *What's that got to do with anything?* It's very peculiar, isn't it? Mind you, at one point I did think I'll go and do it – it's a lot of money and nine weeks over there will be good fun. And I could have made *a bloody fortune*. But it's such a load of rubbish. I mean, there's a part of me that thinks, 'You fool, you'll never earn that sort of money again', but after everything I've said in interviews, how could I possibly hold my head up when the remake of *King Solomon's Mines* comes out and it's me and Richard Chamberlain, 'cos I was offered that for a *fortune*."

For something less than a fortune, Julie accepted a leading role in *She'll Be Wearing Pink Pyjamas*, a low budget, British made, rather uninspiring film about a group of women on an outward bound course. It will be released some time this summer and the reviews are unlikely to be kind. Although her own performance in *Pink Pyjamas* is perfectly adequate, she's not exactly bursting to talk about the film, mentioning in passing that "it seemed a good project at the time". Nevertheless, more films are likely.

"I'd like to do more films, because film doesn't come naturally to me, whereas theatre does. And cinema is actually *easier* in many ways. I think what Sam Shepard says about it is absolutely right – it's easy compared to the theatre. In the theatre you are in control and you have the *whole* to put over – you have to take control of people's senses in every way and focus and do everything that the camera would and that the editor does on film."

A couple of nights before we met, Julie and▶



her *Fool For Love* co-star Ian Charleson had jumped through the obligatory hoops for Terry Wogan. She's ideal chat show fodder, of course – bright, bouncy, not a hint of nerves and always ready to pull a few good anecdotes out of the hat, although she's aware that a lot of the stories are getting a touch stale. Anyway... at one point Wogan asked her quite a telling question (not telling in itself, naturally, but telling in its implications) in which he assumed that her role in a 'serious' play like Fool For Love was something of a novelty for her. It seems that even after her quite devastating performance in one memorable episode of *Boys From The Blackstuff*, a lot of people still see Julie Waters as Just A Comic Actress.

"Oh yeah, definitely, 'Cos a lot of people will have only seen the film of *Educating Rita* probably and the Victoria Wood stuff. If I get taxis coming to the theatre, they'll say, 'Oh, is it a comedy?' I say, 'No, it's *not* a comedy! It's very heavy, actually. I don't think you'd like it'. But they do see me in that way, yeah. There's no doubt about that."

Maybe her voice has something to do with it. I remember at a press screening of *Pink Pyjamas* her first words on screen were greeted with suppressed titters from the audience, and she hadn't said anything funny – it was just that accent. If Glenda Jackson spoke like that she probably wouldn't be taken very seriously either. And it's not just a Birmingham accent (nothing very funny about that), it's a bizarre and apparently unique hybrid.

"It's a bit of a mixture now, I suppose. It's changed. It's just become squashed a bit and strange. People *assume* that it's Liverpool. Also, it's a black country accent – I'm from Smethwick, slightly different from Birmingham.

"Yes, I don't believe all that drama school *crap*. A little girl came round here from drama schol to do a project. She's Scottish and she said, 'I'm having a terrible fight with the speech teacher 'cos she says I have to lose my accent' – all that rubbish. I had a bit of that off them, but they didn't really do that at Manchester. It's absolutely *stupid*, really irritating. What are you supposed to change yourself for? It's like saying everyone must have brown hair. It's stupid. I can see why – they try to say then that you can't do classical roles and stuff. It depends on whether you *want* to do them."

Snobbery is something that Julie Walters will not tolerate in any shape or form. It was one of the things that sparked off her awakening to socialism when she was younger ("Because I don't like being made to feel inadequate or less than other people.") and it's also something which, ironically, attaches very much to theatregoing.

"Yes, that's true. Unfortunately. There's a snobbery about the fringe and there's a snobbery about the National and the RSC. The West End is where you get the most normal audiences. People come in their coachloads up the West End – that's where they go, they go Up West. It's the only place in London you're more likely to get working class people at the theatre, apart from Stratford East. The fringe is where you get *either* very middle class people who (*posh accent*) 'love the theatre' *or* professionals. It's the exact opposite. Yes, that's the sad thing about it, really."

What else annoys you, Julie?

"Prudishness! I can't *bear* it. I love it when I say 'pussy' on stage at the beginning of the play. The other night a whole *group* of women in the audience went, 'Oh!!' It was really loud. And for the first time I said the next two lines *really well*, which I've never really done before, I don't think. 'Cos I really loved it, I really wanted to, you know... Prats!"

Over on the desk there's a large envelope stuffed full of letters – these are the ones she's received *in the last three days*. People write to her all the time. A lot of it is straightforward fan mail, others want autographs, photographs, advice. She can remember only two bad ones.

"One was a really nasty one when I was up in Manchester. It followed some article, I can't remember what it was, and was in the form of a very badly written poem. I think it was from a man, but I'm not sure – two initials and a name – I don't think the person was sure what they were either. He wrote and he said, 'Women like you, you're two a penny, you're churned out of drama school ten a week', all of this very peculiarly written. And it went on about my tits – he said, 'Your tits, both of yours would only fit one of a decent-sized pair, you and your narrow hips, you couldn't bear children', all of this, *really* heavy. It was a man offended by my views, I think.

"And I had one other from a Christian saying, 'Well obviously you've never felt real love, that's why you don't want to get married and the sacrament of marriage is absolutely blah blah blah and your way of looking at things just doesn't make sense. I think you ought to look at them again'. And that's all, really, touchwood. I'd *hate* to have lots of nasty mail, I think I'd find that rather scary, 'cos you're very vulnerable. Anyone could turn up at the stage door – loonies, you know."

All the other letters – in their thousands – she replies to in person.

"I feel you ought to, really. I think you've got a responsibility once you've appeared publicly and made statements in the press, I think you do have to. I try and write a couple of letters every morning and send off a couple of pictures, that kind of thing, just to keep it down. The ones who are collectors just collect everybody's autograph. I always send them, but I don't care about those particularly. But the ones who actually write and ask you about your work and things, I think, well, yeah, they have a *right* to know, somehow."

Perhaps someone should do a survey and find out just how many celebrities answer all their mail personally. I've only ever come across one other and that was Paul Weller. It's an interesting test, because it proves a certain respect for the people who are, after all, paying your wages. What's more, it's proof of a humility which is all too rare in the entertainment world. I hope Julie Walters does go to Hollywood one day – I think she could teach them a thing or two.

AS I'M ABOUT to leave, Julie prepares to settle down to her latest Patricia Highsmith.

"You ought to read her, though. Read her very first book, which is *Strangers On A Train*. Hitchcock made a film out of it. She's a very peculiar woman as well, *very* peculiar. You can't believe that a woman has written them, actually. You read them, anyway."

In a spirit of cultural exchange, I recommend Umberto Eco's *Miracle Of The Rose*. It's a great read, I tell her, but it's quite long – over five hundred pages.

"Ooh," says Julie, "I like a good long one," she chuckles wickedly.

I waited until I'd left the room before I blushed. ●

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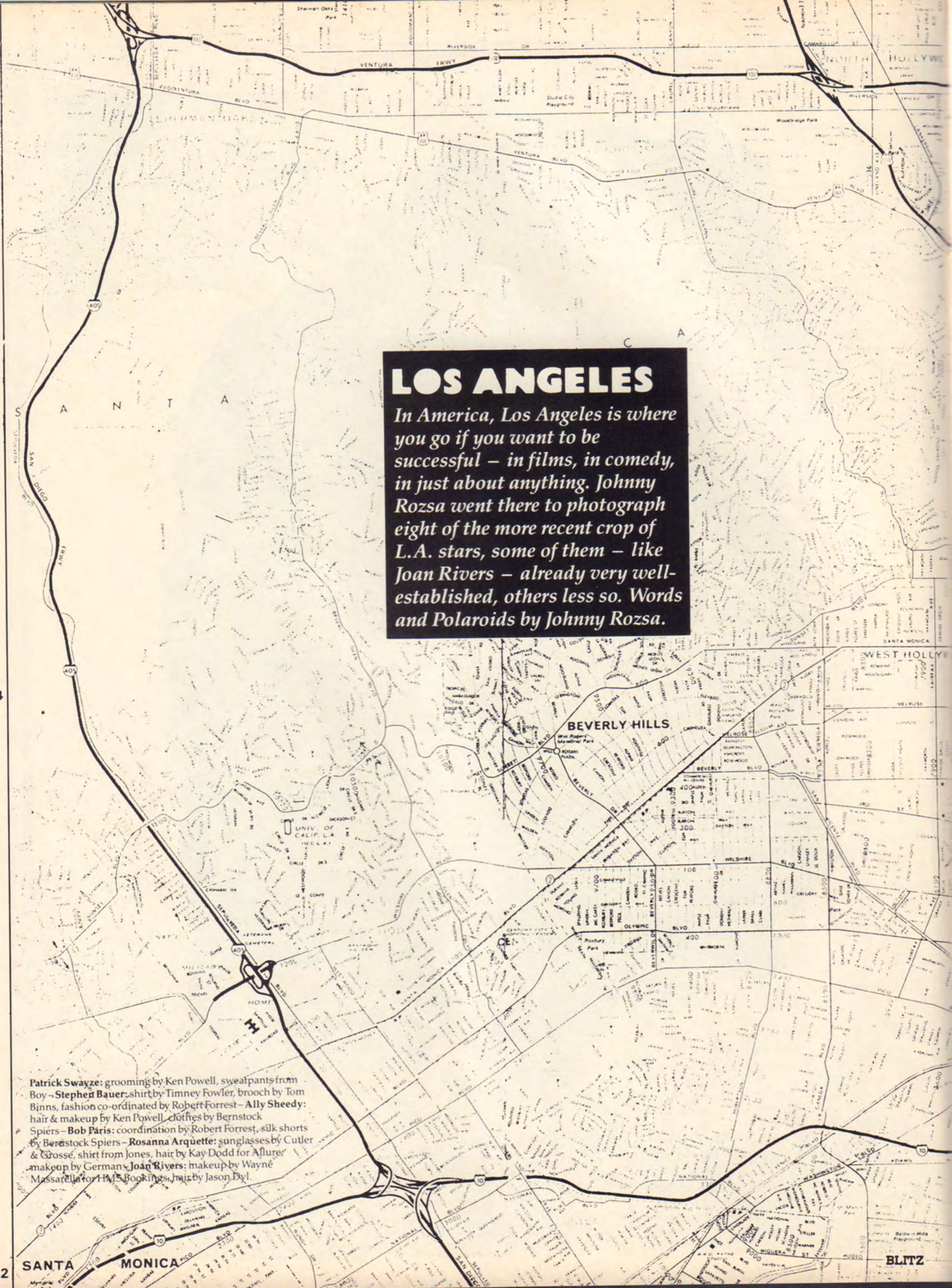


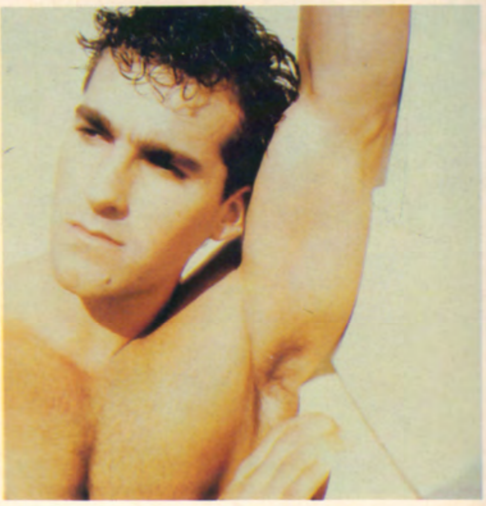
LOS ANGELES

In America, Los Angeles is where you go if you want to be successful – in films, in comedy, in just about anything. Johnny Rozsa went there to photograph eight of the more recent crop of L.A. stars, some of them – like Joan Rivers – already very well-established, others less so. Words and Polaroids by Johnny Rozsa.

Patrick Swayze: grooming by Ken Powell, sweatpants from Boy – **Stephen Bauer:** shirt by Timney Fowler, brooch by Tom Binns, fashion co-ordinated by Robert Forrest – **Ally Sheedy:** hair & makeup by Ken Powell, clothes by Bernstock Spiers – **Bob Paris:** coordination by Robert Forrest, silk shorts by Bernstock Spiers – **Rosanna Arquette:** sunglasses by Cutler & Grosse, shirt from Jones, hair by Kay Dodd for Allure, makeup by German – **Joan Rivers:** makeup by Wayne Massarella for HMS Bookings, hair by Jason Dyl.

Patrick Swayze: *an all-rounder who's working on making a name for himself as a serious actor in the mould of De Niro or Dustin Hoffman. First seen as Ponyboy's big brother in Coppola's* **The Outsiders,** *then as one of the true grit partisans in* **Red Dawn,** *he also dabbles in the theatre, and won an LA Drama Logue award for a play about dance, choreographed by his mother, dancer Patsy Swayze, and co-starring his wife Lisa. He shares a Sun Valley ranch with four horses, two dogs, two peacocks and six prize bantam cocks.*

Rosanna Arquette: *"1985 is my year of hard work," says Rosanna. With a solid reputation as a cult movie star behind her –* **The Executioner's Song, Baby It's You, Johnny Belinda** *and others – Rosanna's moved up a few notches: Martin Scorsese's* **After Hours, Desperately Seeking Susan** *with Madonna, and* **The Aviator** *with Christopher Reeve. Just finished is* **Silverado,** *a western by director and scriptwriter Lawrence Kasdan.*



Joan Rivers: *who needs no introduction. America's First Lady is in Britain at the moment following up the success of her first visit last year. With appearances on Wogan, The Tube, Woman's Hour and more, there'll be no escaping the Rivers wit this month. She's also doing three nights at London's Pizza On The Park to try out some new material.*

Bob Paris: *take any muscle and fitness magazine of the past two years and the chances are that you'd find Bob Paris either on the cover or inside endorsing sportswear and equipment. Only 24, he's won just about every major bodybuilding title for the last three years – and he takes his profession very seriously: "I don't want to be stereotyped as just 'the guy with the muscle'. Bodybuilding is an art form, with my body as the finished sculpture. One part of my body totally relates to another. The whole thing is a total artistic package – not just being the guy with the biggest pecs . . ."*

Stephen Bauer: *his second movie,* **Thief of Hearts,** *has just opened in London – he plays a thief who steals a woman's diary, then sets out to fulfill all her sexual fantasies. His first movie had him as Al Pacino's amorous sidekick in* **Scarface,** *a Cuban gangster convinced that the way to pick up American girls is to wiggle his tongue at them. Bauer himself is modest about such typecasting . . .*

Kelly Le Brock: *Gene Wilder's fantasy mate in* **The Woman In Red,** *now making her second movie,* **Weird Science.** *"The story is about these two young boys who conjure up a sexy woman on a computer . . ." she says.*

Apollonia: *shot to fame as Prince's girlfriend in* **Purple Rain** *and in real life. Now that she's no longer in favour with The Purple One (rumour has it that Sheila E is the new one), she's continuing her film career with a role in* **The Last Dragon.** *Meanwhile, her new single,* **Blue Limousine,** *has just been released.*

Ally Sheedy: *now in her final semester at the University of California, Ally Sheedy divides her time neatly between work and homework. She made her name as Matthew Broderick's girlfriend in* **War Games.** *Just released in the States is* **The Breakfast Club,** *a sort of modern-day* **Rebel Without A Cause,** *in which she co-stars as the school weirdo alongside* **Repo Man's** *Emilio Estevez. Soon to follow are* **St. Elmo's Fire** *and* **Blue City,** *the latter produced by Walter Hill.*

U BAHN X

YOUNG HEARTS *of Europe*

SEVEN INCH – YOUNG HEARTS OF EUROPE / KISS OF DEATH
TWELVE INCH – YOUNG HEARTS OF EUROPE VALKYRIE MEGA-MIX / KISS OF DEATH PUNISHMENT MEGA-MIX

neat neat neat

Performance artist, film director and fabric designer, Dieter Meier is also one half of Swiss band Yello, whose new album, *Stella*, has just been released.

- **Interview by William Shaw.**
- **Photograph by Anton Corbijn.**

dieter meier

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

"Thankyou."

How old are you now?

"Forty... You know, you're the first person to ask me that now that the first number isn't a three anymore. It's funny . . . forty is a pretty *abstract* figure."

ON DIETER MEIER'S fortieth birthday, he finds himself in London. He's here to look for backers for his second feature film, but also as one half of the group Yello, the most marketable of all of his many artistic activities, to promote their new LP *Stella*.

A man who answers questions carefully and politely, he looks, as ever, more like a Swiss banker than a pop musician, with his neat semi-circular moustache, his short hair swept back from his high forehead, his business-like jacket, tie and protruding handkerchief... though (perhaps as a concession to the birthday festivities) the tie is lime green and the trousers are tartan. His appearance smacks of self-caricature, though he assures me it's not intended as such:

"No. It's not like I'm trying to make fun of the fact that I'm from Zurich, where all the gnomes come from who are trying to screw the English. I always dress like this. I always wear a tie..."

What others do in the name of Pop, Dieter Meier does in the name of Art, even if the end product is more or less the same thing. In what might simply have been a problem with English vocabulary, Meier at one point describes himself as a compulsive "creator of things", but the vagueness of the term is probably appropriate.

"I was brought up in a Protestant surrounding, and working is like the main thing, you know. I feel guilty sometimes, thinking that I'm not doing enough."

The proud possessor of a Protestant work ethic, Meier wishes to fill his time by making 'things' – as many as possible. He's a self-taught polymath – a sculptor, a painter, a performance artist, a designer, a film maker, an author, a musician. One of a few particularly athletic metaphors he uses from time to time throughout the interview is that of the mountaineer.

"I think it's an expression of the spirit. It's always a different little mountain that you're climbing. There's only one reason not to do something and that's if you're not able to do it. That's boring. Like if a bullfighter fights the same bull he killed five years ago, that's a joke."

Dieter 'Climb Every Mountain' Meier. Or to put it another way, one of his more autobiographical projects is a little exhibition he's putting together back in Zurich. It's called 'One Of Each' and will consist of Dieter making one chair, one ring, one pair of trousers, and so on... One of each, all objects made for the first time.

Do you ever think that you might be strange?

"No. I'm probably strange to people because I don't fit into the existing categories of business, art, painting and music. It's just something I do to entertain myself, which is the most important thing on this planet.

"It's probably strange for people that this guy's wearing, as you say, a Swiss banker's outfit, and that he's performing at the Roxy in New York in front of six thousand people over two evenings, singing in some crazy non-existent Swahili-like language, but it's only

strange because there's no category for it. I feel a very, very normal average human being with just a need to be a rope dancer, or a mountain climber or something.

"I have a very moral approach to what I'm doing. Do the best in whatever you do. I put as much care into asking a bus driver where I have to go as I put into doing a song, and it's as important as doing a song."

It's not, he explains, a burden of creative genius that he carries round with him, as the German film director Werner Herzog professes to, just a simple requirement that he should do as much as he can as well as he can.

"To me Herzog is a lunatic. He always comes across with this holiness. It's total crap! To pull a boat over a mountain in order to film *Fitzcarraldo*, what a *disgusting* idea, in order to fulfil your existential need for adventure. He should go fuck himself or whatever, but not give his movie a pseudo-credibility by actually pulling this stupid boat over a mountain. If you have no ideas then you have to pretend that you are really suffering. What a creep."

Meier's first film, a kidnap thriller called *Take It All*, was never released in this country, though it was moderately well received in Europe. His next is to be an ominous-sounding mixture of science fiction and opera.

"Directing a movie is like poison. You want to do it again. It's like," he chooses his favoured image of the day, "like climbing Mount Everest without a mask. Total responsibility over a lot of beautiful things.

"People tell you that in order to become a director you have to learn a lot, you have to go to film school. That's not true. I had no problem, whatsoever doing that movie, and anybody could do it."

But then Meier is a self-confessed believer in the virtues of amateurism and self-education.

"I'm a declared enemy of all kinds of Art school. It's totally the wrong approach, because the most important thing for the artist is to be alone with what he does. I think it's very important for an artist to learn to live with his individuality. Even if he isn't creative for many years, he learns more than if he is protected by an Art school.

"The things you have to learn in order to paint, or do a movie, you learn in half a day, half a month, and the rest is you. So Art school's a joke. Especially when they try and teach you avant garde or something. They teach you yesterday's art, and yesterday's art by definition is made by people who made fools of themselves in order to achieve it. Now you have these 'New Spirit In Painting' blokes everywhere and that's what they teach... it's crap."

Before acquiring his notoriety as a musician in the late seventies, Meier got himself noticed in the early years of the decade in the fledgling world of 'performance art'. Escapades like counting out metal objects into bags or buying words off passers by have produced the image of Meier as genial fruitcake, but he's gradually drifted away from performance, despairing at its status as part of the introspective avant garde.

"Those circles... let's face it, they were always full of shit. I mean, most of it is total rubbish, and the art produced from within it is total rubbish. I think it's a petit bourgeois category."

Back in those days, Meier used to indulge in a very peculiar – but typical – act of mental discipline every day. He would pick up a guitar with just one string on it, play a few notes, and sing to himself. It was, he says, bringing up another of his favourite athletic images, a mental equivalent of jogging. This developed into improvised singing in front of some of Zurich's rock bands, but he despaired of the musical clichés involved until meeting up with a young musician by the name of Boris Blank in 1979. After an orgy of experimental recording, they emerged as Yello.

"I was never very pleased with rock'n'roll, but Boris' sound paintings fit very well into my approach to things. He never rehearses anything, he only records. He likes the unique moment of creation which cannot be repeated.

"I write the lyrics literally in the studio with a typewriter, some I just sing there as I hear the music. I just sing them and forget them when I've done them."

Meier was particularly attracted to pop music because it turned the elitist morality of art on its head, as a form where the whole market is dominated by the consumer.

"I think we're approaching a new Renaissance feeling in the arts, where the avant garde as a petit bourgeois administered thing is definitely over. I couldn't stand depending on the rulers of the petit bourgeois protectorate. The new aristocracy who tell artists what is good and what is bad is the people. They have a much better judgment than these pseudo-intellectual rulers of the avant garde world."

And like a true Swiss, he revels in the corporate efficiency of the pop industry:

"I love the idea that this act has a big arena. We are presenting our rope dance and we want to make sure that the dance is seen by as many people as possible. Of course, it does influence the rope dance in a way, but I love the big arena of pop music. I love the struggle for the big arena."

Much of what you do is dance music. Do you go to clubs much?

"Yes, I love them. I love the dance code. Dance music was the first music, and it's the music of the jungles of our cities today. It's very important for people to move to music."

And it's sexual, too.

"Yes. But if there is sex, it's in a comic context. It's not Ingmar Bergman... or pornography. It's sex as comedy, not a serious rodgering."

AS THE EVENING has worn on, Meier answering every question at length, we've ended up sitting in almost total darkness. He is beginning to yawn politely behind a hand.

"I have to make a light," he explains, as he moves to the switch, illuminating the company office festooned with the customary gold and platinum discs.

Some questions are best left until last, just in case.

Could it be that you're really just a pretentious pop musician?

Meier takes this very seriously – he considers the question: "I don't know... I really don't know. I feel all these different things I'm doing are like a guy who's trying to climb mountains, who just has little mountains he climbs..."

And the hills, as they say, are alive with the sound of music. ●

THE DR£AM FACTORY

● **Words by Marc Issue**

●**Photographs by Mark Collicott**

THE Advertising Industry is one of the biggest service industries in this country, turning over roughly two percent of Gross National Product: that's about two and a half to three billion pounds, in used fivers. One billion pounds on television, another billion or thereabouts in the press, and the rest spread between the other advertising media – posters, handbills, and so on. It's the most expensive cultural form that there has ever been (unless you count nuclear weapons as a cultural form).

The sixties were the Golden Age of the Ad Man, as well as a lot of other things. Advertising was something groovy to be into. There were lots of agencies, employing lots of people, there were long lunches and there were fast cars. Then came the recession. Many redundancies. The number of people employed in the business shrank by one third. The lunches met in the middle, and a lot of the fast cars were repossessed. Now advertising is growing again – but there are fewer faces to smile about it, and the successful ones are working harder, rather than hiring hands. The competition to get in is jolly fierce.

Advertising is power. Real power, and the sooner we understand that, the better. It has always been about more than selling things, but the capability to sell ideology has been amply demonstrated over the past decade and a half. Governments of what is jokingly called the Free World owe their "mandates" to the power of suggestion through advertising. The implications are sobering, but they've been there all along. And we were warned. We get the advertising we deserve. A tone of voice, a pointed turn of phrase – those strings are pulled because they are the ones that will make us dance.

MUMMY, where does advertising come from? The characteristics of an advertising agency are simple – its only real assets are its people. All you need to set up an advertising agency is a person and a phone. Everything else is optional. Agencies do not necessarily produce

"I think if this place was nuked, and thirty thousand years from now they dug up the remains of our civilisation, they'd have problems with a few things, trying to work out what they were for. Roundabouts for one thing, and forty-eight sheet posters. What were these enormous messages, these wonderful great expanses of propaganda? Yeah, some advertising is art, but I don't know whether that's a good thing or not . . ."

David Horry, Art Director,
Collett Dickinson Pearce

"On the whole, advertising follows trends, it doesn't make them. Who decides that Nike shoes are cool to be seen in, or that we should drink Stella Artois, or white rum, or vodka? God knows. Advertising can't dictate that, you can't sell something that's already out. You can't sell Mackeson to young kids, although no doubt there's an art school bar somewhere where it's cool to drink Mackeson in bottles. On the whole, it isn't, and there'd be no point in spending money trying to make it happen . . ."

Ian Potter, Creative Director, FCO Univas.

artwork for advertising – they can hire graphic design studios to do that; and they don't necessarily conduct research – there are market research companies which specialise in that. At minimum, an agency will buy space in the medium, commission their ad from a creative team, and convince their client that they are doing more for less money than their competitors. These agencies are called media shops, and there's more and more of them born all the time. But more often, the agency will co-ordinate an entire campaign, including the most visible part of the procedure, The Copy.

The British Advertising Industry likes to think of itself as the most creative and the most sophisticated in the world. This may or may not be the case. There is no reason to suppose that advertising is more effective, in terms of selling things (or ideas), in this country than in any other. It may be that the British are more inclined to engage in a kind of cultural discourse with their advertising than some other nationalities are with theirs – that indicates some kind of sophistication, I suppose. But whatever the reality, British advertisers have evolved a particular regard for their leading Creative Directors, which amounts in some cases to a personality cult. Tim Brooks, editor of the new trade journal, Media Week, explains why this is . . .

"They have a lot to do with the British Trade press, these personality cults. A lot of the top people are brilliant creative people. If you look at the British Film industry, you'll find a lot of the directors – Ridley Scott, for example – have come out of advertising. The personality cults have emerged because the top agencies have decided that creativity is the most important aspect of what they're doing, and if the creative work is right, the client will stay. So they're prepared to pay for the Right People. If you have a recognised Creative Genius working for your agency, they may personally bring in five, or thirty, million pounds worth of business. So if you're paying them £100,000 per annum, that's money well spent. And if they decide they want to be paid £120,000 per annum, you'll say yes, you won't tell them to piss off.

"The most famous example of this is the story of Geoff Stark. He was a creative director at Saatchi's, he'd worked there for years, and was acknowledged to be brilliant. He announced he was leaving Saatchi's to set up his own agency. Charles Saatchi, so the story goes, got out his chequebook, pushed it across the desk, handed Geoff Stark a pen, and said, 'What do you want . . .?' Stark said he wanted to form his own agency. He did it, and Hedger Mitchell Stark has been very successful.

"Just before Christmas, Saatchi's bought the agency; Stark becomes a creative director at Saatchi's once again, and it's rumoured that his personal take in that transaction, his asking price for selling out, was in excess of three million pounds. Saatchi's also got an account handler as well, but they bought the agency, it seems, to get Stark back. And that's a lot of money to pay for a creative director."

Indeed. A nice little earner to get into, as they might say in between the commercials. But how do *I* get into that?

"With difficulty. There's no well-trodden paths, like there are in law or something like that. The nearest thing is a degree in art or design. There are one or two colleges which do courses in advertising art now, and graduates from those often get picked up by the agencies semi-automatically. Another method is a graduate milkround – they go head-hunting around the main universities. But not all the agencies take graduates. Abbott Mead Vickers is an example of one that doesn't. Their chairman is Peter Mead. He never went to university, and has never employed a graduate as far as I know. Yellowhammer is another that tends not to take graduates, but a lot of them do.

"People will go to extraordinary lengths to get into the business. It's not unknown for people to wait in lobbies and collar a guy for whom they want to work when he goes in or out. Nor is it unknown to stand on the pavement outside an agency with a sandwich board, advertising yourself. It has worked! I know several instances of people who got in by offering to work for nothing, and then waiting to prove themselves in the hope that they'll be taken on and given a pay rise. To be fair, they usually do – an individual can make quite a dramatic ascent through an agency."

ADVERTISING to, or at, or for, the youth market is a speciality which is enveloped in slightly more than the average amount of mystery. The right way to go about doing it is a subject which the advertisers never tire of debating. (No one knows whether there *is* a right way to do it, but a great deal of time is spent looking for it, just in case).

The industry as a whole is a young person's preserve – it is possible to make whatever your pile should amount to by the age of thirty, and to be well retired, and moved on into a more sedate occupation, like lion taming, or bomb disposal.

Actual knowledge about advertising to youth is a notoriously unstable quantity. Expensive market research done six months ago will be almost useless now, so far as what is specifically hip, cool or otherwise trendy. But clients will cling to their expensively collected data, and creative departments will complain that the information is out of date, with no actual effect.

I asked David Porter, Media Manager at Yellowhammer, whether the ground rules had changed much since youth spending-power took a nose-dive during the seventies. Or whether that nose-dive, which is the basis for more than one learned analysis of contemporary youth culture, was a mere trick of the light . . .

"I've heard two completely different answers to that question in the past ten days, and both of them were from editors of music papers. Statistically, youth spending hasn't dropped overall, but with colossal youth unemployment in some areas, there is definitely some effect. That doesn't necessarily mean that priorities for spending will have changed – record sales have actually increased over the past few years, although jeans have had a very hard time. You have to research your own product as you work on it, because a lot of the established rules *have* gone out the window. We also know that the youth population, say the sixteen year-old population, has peaked, and we're looking at a steady decline in numbers over the next few years. So marketing is getting tougher in general."

So, in the light of that, how do the agencies cope? How many of them actually get it right? And how many of them actually agree about what is right? Here are nine different campaigns, aimed primarily, but by no means exclusively, at a teenage and early twenties market. Comments are by FCO Univas Creative Director Ian Potter, and David Horry, an Art Director at Collett Dickenson Pearce.

Tim Brooks, Editor, Media Week magazine.

David Porter, Media Manager, The Yellowhammer Agency.

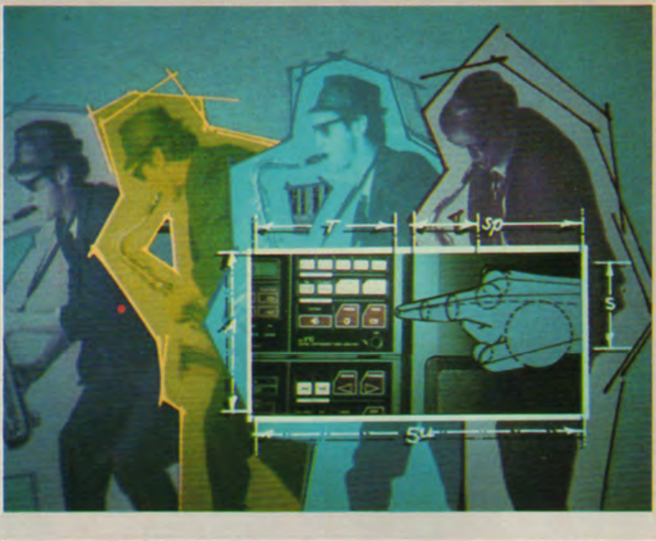
Someone's got to give you a reference to open an account at NatWest.
She'll do fine.
NatWest
The Action Bank

Natwest Bank

The campaign attempts, by various means, to demonstrate just how easy it is to open a bank account, and to assure us that our hairstyles are irrelevant to our desirability as customers. But we already knew that banks in general aren't fussy whose money they take, we do know that our bank managers expect us to dress in certain well-defined ways if we want them to smile when we walk through their doors. Surely grooviness and a liberal attitude towards hair styling are not top of anyone's list when it comes to choosing which bank is going to make money out of us?

DH: "Those 'Kilroy' press ads look wrong, there's something not quite right about the art direction, which is strange, because they were done by the same agency that did the Winston Campaign. On the other hand the cinema ad with Ade Edmundson worked a treat – I think it might have alienated older people, though! It has a better voice than the press ads, to say more or less the same thing. The trouble is, banks are banks, and they always will be . . ."

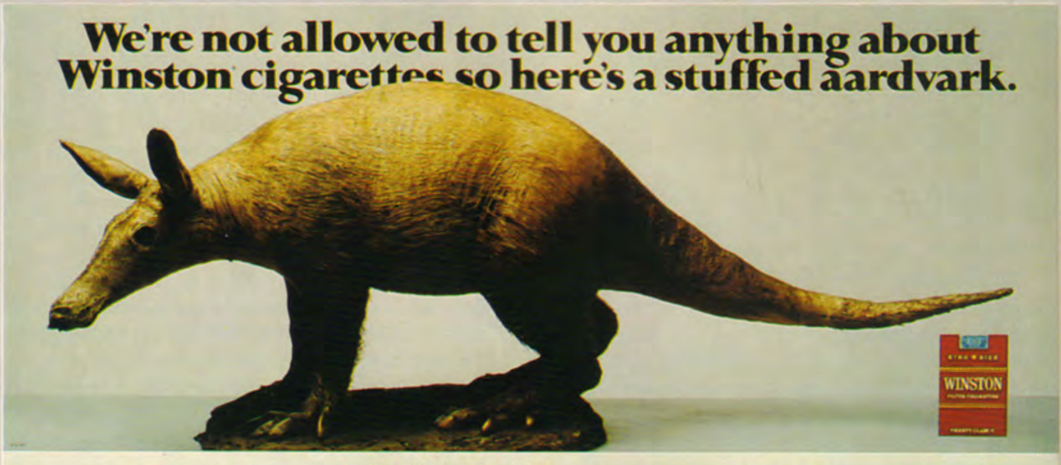
IP: *(on cinema ad):* "I hated that . . . it was simply a bank trying to be hip, and it didn't work – if you're gonna talk to young people about banks, there's no need to be stupid, they aren't thick. It was out of date, as well – by the time an advertising agency gets to hear about what the kids are doing, and made their mind up to use it, the kids are usually doing something else, and you're too late. In that ad you could see exactly what they were trying to do, and I think young people could see through it, too . . ."



Toshiba

Jack the Lad in the Twenty-fifth Century!!!! An animated cockney robot scrapes together a handful of our major current advertising symbols – signs without much of a meaning – to produce thirty seconds of contemporary television. In the thirty-first second, we acknowledge that we have witnessed something indisputably contemporary . . . but what, exactly?

DH: "Did you know the ASA had a letter of complaint about that one? It said that the ad was offensive to non-Cockneys . . .!"


We're not allowed to tell you anything about Winston cigarettes so here's a stuffed aardvark.
WINSTON
LOW TO MIDDLE TAR As defined by H.M. Government
DANGER: Government Health WARNING: CIGARETTES CAN SERIOUSLY DAMAGE YOUR HEALTH

Winston Cigarettes

A campaign directed at the Advertising Standards Authority. The legislation and codes of conduct surrounding tobacco advertising in this country puts the agency in a position where a frontal assault seems to be the only solution to the problem. The ads did not engage the viewer in any way – we are witnessing a dialogue between the purveyors of 'vice' and the upholders of public morality. These ads *may* have moved people to take up an attitude about cigarette advertising, but what, if anything, did they do for Winston cigarettes in particular?

IP: "I didn't like these at first, but I warmed to them after they'd been going a while. The only worry I would have is how many people outside the industry are aware of the hassles we have with people like the Advertising Standards Authority over cigarette advertising. I don't know whether people know or care about those problems. The campaign was fun, though . . ."

DH: "A very brave attempt to stick two fingers up at the Advertising Code of Practice. They were very amusing, but I don't think they probably sold many cigarettes. The campaign had a lot of wit – though in the case of the 'tart leaning on a bar, the wit was with a very small 'w', I must admit . . ."

Levi Jeans

There is an unmistakable fascination for ads which ooze real money from every pore – the lavish cinema commercials (There's rivets/There's stitching...) and the Land of the Giants press ads were particularly ostentatious and served to *reassure* Levi consumers. Ideal brand leader advertising – self assured, serene, moody and magnificent.

DH: "Rather parsimonious, I thought. I didn't like the way they talk down to people, particularly in the press ads."

IP: "Great films, beautifully done. You can only do that kind of ad for a product that's as well established as Levi's, though. It was an effective brand leader campaign. I liked the barracuda film better than the copper mine, it was more up to date, more avant garde as a film . . ."

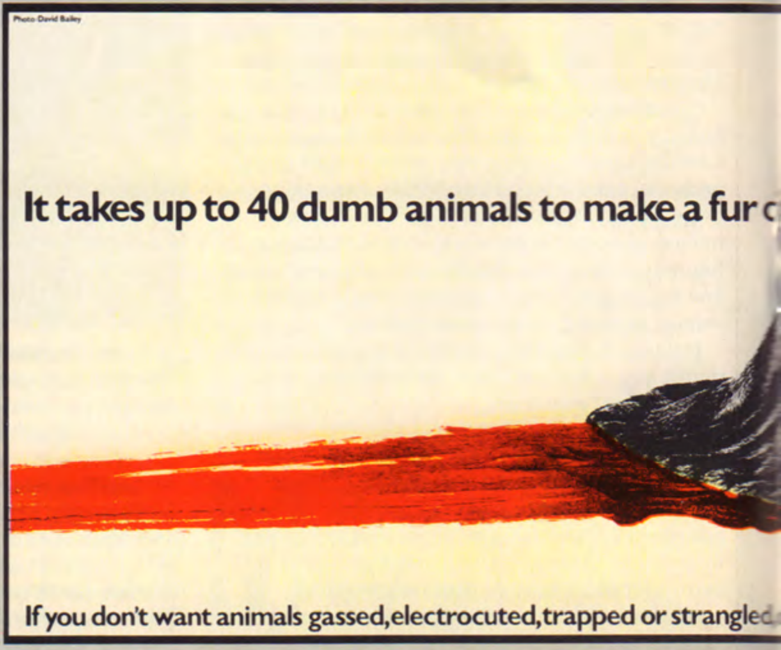
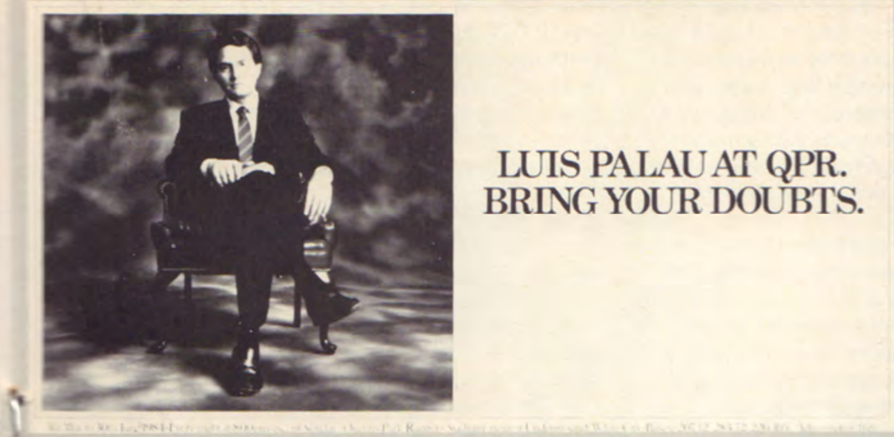


Photo David Bailey
It takes up to 40 dumb animals to make a fur c
If you don't want animals gassed,electrocuted,trapped or strangled


LUIS PALAU AT QPR.
BRING YOUR DOUBTS.

Luis Palau

There he sits, in his leather armchair, legs composed. He's got the answer to all your problems, and he's going to Armageddon in an expensive suit. He's ready and willing to lead you by the nose. The photo says, "we've got everything under control". Fortunately, he is asking a higher price than most of us can muster, and *he looks very pricey.*

DH: "I suppose if you were lonely, and single, and going through a massive emotional crisis, I can see that those would have worked. They didn't get me down to QPR, though. I was having a different sort of crisis at Old Trafford, watching United getting stuffed by Coventry . . . !"

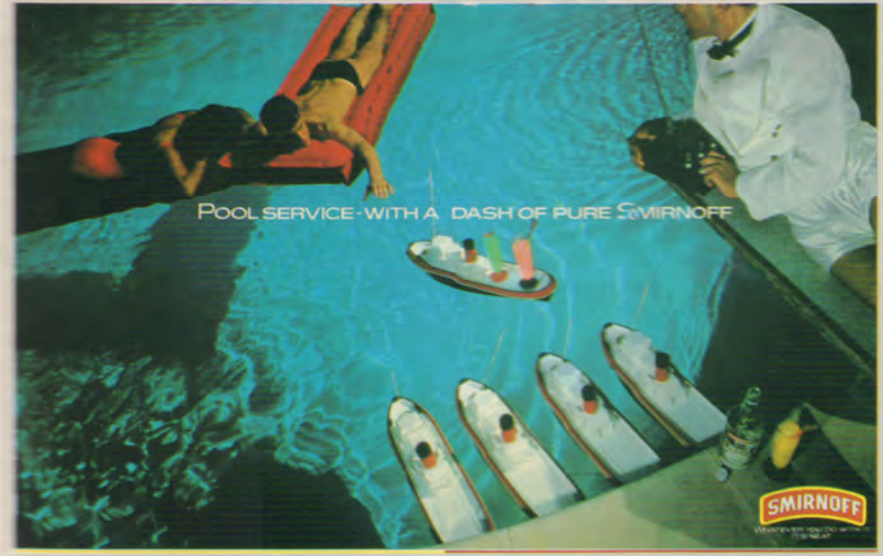
IP: "Long silence *(he said, after a long silence).* I hate those sort of guys. It was well done, it was nice packaging, but it's all a bit creepy, him sitting there in his leather chair, saying, 'Bring Your Doubts' . . ."

Holsten Pils

This is what happens when a decent creative team is allowed to run amok – the product (a bottle of beer) is driven out to the margins of what is a marvellous piece of TV entertainment. It's a lot more entertaining, in my estimation, than the vast majority of the programmes it interrupts.

DH: "Brilliant, that's all you can say about them. Just brilliant. A lot of clients get rather worried these days if you want to use something old-fashioned, but these show that it's a matter of how you treat the material. Brilliant!"

IP: "They're just great commercials, you don't have to be any age group to appreciate them. It shows that a really good idea will break down a lot of barriers about age. I don't know how many fifteen year-olds know who George Raft is, but I don't think it matters . . ."



Smirnoff Vodka

In the early seventies, advertising models testified that "accountancy was my life until I discovered Smirnoff" – drinking the stuff would actually change the way you looked at your life, and its meaning. The recent campaign focussed on more specific activities, endowing consumers with prodigious powers of lateral thinking – our models put their feet up while technology, and ingenuity, gets the work done just the same. A leisure product generating leisure time?

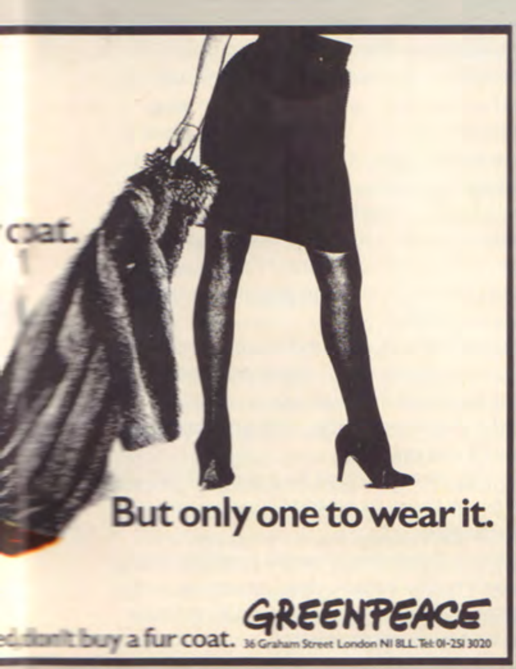
IP: "You can see what they're trying to do, but they're too forced. I don't think vodka *needs* that much gloss. I think this campaign is riding on the back of an ad man's idea of a New Wave, and it doesn't quite come off . . ."

DH: "I liked the original campaign, back in 1970 or whenever it was. The current campaign is misdirected – it goes for the youth market in a way but it doesn't quite work. There isn't a lot of *joy* in those ads . . ."

Kelly Girl

This TV ad was shown only in London, and it's easy to see why – The Commuters' Revolt is an appealing fantasy, but not something to capture the imaginations of the sturdy citizens of, say Middlesborough. The ad makes no actual claims for Kelly Girl and what it can do for *you* (none that we notice, anyway) but a positive, liberating *image* is transmitted. It's interesting, don't you think, that Fritz Lang's pessimistic imagery of the distant future is appreciated as Kelly Girl's vision of the present . . .?

IP: "It was a nice piece of film, very fresh. If I'd come up with that for a target audience of young girls I'd be pleased with it. If that was the brief, I think they did very well, it had a sort of rebellious thing to it, which was good . . ."


coat.
But only one to wear it.
GREENPEACE
d. don't buy a fur coat.
36 Graham Street London N1 8LL. Tel: 01-251 3020

Greenpeace

The image of a model trailing a fur coat across a display hoarding and leaving a trail of blood behind her is potent anti-advertising – the medium is employed to *deter* consumption. It makes a real and conscious connection between the fur trade and the bits that the furriers throw away – the dead animals that live inside them. This pushes back the frontiers of campaign advertising, to devastating effect.

IP: "I thought that poster was great, and it *did* work. If you see somebody going round in a big fur coat, you don't think, 'Wow, isn't that beautiful!' or, 'Gosh! They must be really rich and successful!' You think, 'What a wanker . . .' That was a small budget to very good use . . ."

CREDITS

HOLSTEN PILS (WAYNE). Agency: Gold Greenlees Trott. Director: Richard Sloggett. Copywriter: Stephen Henry. Art Director: Axel Chaldecott. Agency Producer: Diane Croll. Production: B.F.C.S. Ltd.

KELLY GIRL (METROPOLIS). Agency: Gold Greenless Trott. Director: Nick Lewin. Animation Director: Paul Vester. Copywriter: Nick Wray. Agency Producer: Diane Croll. Music; Joe & Co.

TOSHIBA. Agency: Gold Greenlees Trott. Director: Paul Vester/Richard Sloggett. Copywriter: Dave Trott. Art Director: Gordon Smith. Agency Producer: Greg Dilkes. Production Company: Speedy Cartoons. Music: Joe Campbell & Paul Hart. Voice Ian Dury.

GREENPEACE. Agency: Yellowhammer. Photography: David Bailey. Art Director: Jeremy Pemburton. Copywriter: Alan Page.

SMIRNOFF (SWIMMING POOL). Agency: Young & Rubicam. Art Director: Colin Morris. Copywriter: Peter Townsend.

NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK. Agency: J. Walter Thompson. Art Director: Peter Watson. Photography: Stak. Copywriter: Linda Richardson.

LEVI'S. Agency: Bartle Bogle Hegarty. Art Director: John Hegarty. Copywriter: Chris Palmer. Photography: Carrie Branovan.

WINSTON (AARDVARK). Agency: J. Walter Thompson. Art Director: Geoff Turner. Copywriter: Paul Fishlock. Creative Group Head: Nick Fordham.

LUIS PALAU. Agency: Sales Promotion. Art Director: Gary Betts. Copywriter: Malcolm Green.

SOME GUYS HAVE ALL THE LUCK

robert palmer

●Interview by Johnny Waller.
●Photograph by Richard Croft.

"WHEN WE FIRST moved into Nassau, we had a neighbour who had this daughter and she was like a sylph: she had green hair from the chlorine in the pool because she was a champion swimmer, she was brown from the sun and she was neither a boy nor a girl – she was only eleven.

"Her father had been out there ten or fifteen years and they didn't renew his work-permit. He was from Newcastle and they had to return home – this girl, suddenly uprooted at that age and taken to Newcastle. Next thing we knew, she showed up at our doorstep – fat, pregnant and pale ... and with a Geordie accent! She'd run away from home, so we talked to her for a while and it was really rough for her. Eventually her father got a job in Calgary. Last time I saw her – she's sixteen now – she'd got her figure back and had a broad Canadian accent!

"It's just the kind of period where you have to fit in."

Do you think you can fit in just about anywhere?

"Yeah. Yeah, I do – I'm good at that."

ROBERT PALMER, golden-throated soul crooner, golden-tanned would-be playboy, is in town to talk. Despite his long and distinguished career, from Vinegar Joe through a succession of white soul classics, on this occasion the massed ranks of the pop press are waiting in line to ask him about his new (gasp!) Duran Duran connection – he's the featured vocalist on a project organised by Duran's John Taylor and called the Power Station.

"John called me up on the phone and said, 'Get out here, I need you on this record,' and I said, 'Well, it's a bit awkward at the moment,' but he sent me a cassette and I loved it. So I got on the plane, wrote the words on the plane, got off the other end and away you go! I think a combination like that is more to do with chemistry and it isn't necessarily anything to do with music... Those kind of things just happen to me."

They seem to have been happening most of his life. Palmer lived the first ten years of his life on the sunny Mediterranean island of Malta ("It was gorgeous. It was so hot that the summer was like a long holiday, so I was at the beach all the time."), but he was actually born in Batley, Yorkshire.

Did you have a troubled childhood?

"No. I hung around with adults most of the time. I was late fitting in. It's funny, because I'd be shifting schools all the time – three years here and then move. It was only awkward when I got back to England. When I came back from Malta, when I was ten, I'd been in a Naval school and *(adopts finely clipped elocution)* I spoke like *this*. I showed up in this school in Scarborough and had the mickey taken out of me, so I quickly developed a Yorkshire accent. My dad was in the navy, so we moved around a lot and I don't really feel I belong anywhere... I've lived longer in Nassau than anywhere, and that's definitely home. You miss *people* more than places..."

I remark that he doesn't seem to have the usual rock snobbery where certain musicians avoid each other because of the type of music they play. Is there anyone you wouldn't talk to or wouldn't consider talking to?

"Oh, that's interesting... I've a list a mile long – Crystal Gayle for a start, she's a snob! But as far as avoiding people, no – there's always something fascinating about people. I mean, I met Billy Squier – and I have a real problem with his music, it's just personal taste, but it was no problem putting that out of my mind and having a conversation with the guy. So what? He might have been a cobbler who makes rotten shoes, but that wouldn't make any difference.

OK, let's say tomorrow Billy Gibbons from ZZ Top phoned you and said he needed you to do a vocal...

"Fine, fine... *(starts to sing)* 'TV dinners... running through my head.' I'm so rhythm-oriented in my approach – it's a basic funkiness that attracts me."

As if to prove his inherent funkiness, Mr. Palmer shows me a cassette of mainly black music he's been carrying around – James Brown, Chaka Khan, Ike & Tina Turner... and Prince.

How do you rate someone like Prince?

"Well that song on there is *Head* off a really early album – it's got a great verse that goes *(starts singing again)*: 'When I first met you baby/ You were on your way to be wed/ You were such a sexy thing/ I had to have you in my bed' and then the girl's voice comes in and she says, 'You're such a hunk, I'll give you head/ Until your love is red' – *GROSS!* It's a killer beat and a great bass-line. He had another one called *Let's Pretend We're Married*. But of late I can't get near him, I don't like *Purple Rain* at all."

It's interesting that you sing a lyric like that – if ZZ Top did that it would be regarded as outrageous, yet for Prince there's an implied assumption that he's somehow subverting macho sexuality because he's not big and butch. It's regarded as tongue-in-cheek.

"Yeah – I'm very interested in that, actually. I've just recorded a song called *I Didn't Mean To Turn You On* – do you know it? I heard it and it was sung by a girl: she sings, 'When I took you out/ I knew what you were all about/ But when I did/ I didn't mean to turn you on' – and that just offended me so much! But now when a guy sings it – I love those twists. Like Olivia Newton-John singing 'let's get physical!' I mean, I couldn't believe how anybody was supposed to swallow that – if it was Prince, it would make sense!"

Which singers do you like?

"Well, this new guy from Go West is really good and Howard Hewlett *(from Shalamar)* is my favourite of people who are still alive. Who else... oh, Billie Holliday and Marvin Gaye. I'm very into traditional Persian singers, too.

"But a lot of the time I found I was listening to music that I would never attempt to sing. Then it occurred to me: why? Why not have a go? So I've been doing a lot of different stuff... it's an indulgence really. On the last album there was a track called *The Silver Gun*, which was in Urdu. I spent, God, six months going over and over this thing – and I finally nailed it. It was great to put in on tape and listen back to it and go 'yeah yeah!'

"Obviously I've got my limitations, and I try to work within them – but there are certain things that I just didn't think about stretching, and lately I *have* been doing, and I'm really pleased with the results."

How do you rate yourself as a singer? Do you think you're up there in an elite among your contemporaries?

"No... I think I'm in an unusual position in that I haven't really established anything and yet... I've kept afloat, I live well and I've never had to make any compromises."

Do you crave more commercial success?

"No, I never have – I never listen to the Top Ten. Occasionally something will get in there that I like, but it's really not my fodder, it never was, I never did listen to it, so that's an accident..."

Does that mean you're not competitive?

"No, I'm not competitive in any way. I'm not jealous either *(slight laugh)*. Oh... except when my wife had babies, that made me jealous!"

Family life is obviously important to Robert Palmer: but such a relaxed environment – he lives in Nassau after all – seems an unlikely setting to create music with a real cutting edge. So where does that come from?

"It's because I want something to come out of the speakers that will make me jump! And if I don't do it, nobody's going to do it for me."

I don't see how you can be successful in such a shitty business and still have this *laissez-faire* attitude. You must have made a conscious decision to break away in the first place and become a solo artist.

"Yeah, yeah – but I was driven, I *had* to do it. It wasn't conscious will or effort. If I didn't do that, I wasn't doing right. I had no choice. It always seems that things are like that to me – you're faced with a set of circumstances and you can do *THIS* or you can do *THAT*, so you do *THIS*," he laughs. "When it's cold I wear a hat!"

Yeah, but when it's cold, some people just stay at home.

"Well, I dunno – I don't think I have that choice."

So what drives you on to create?

"Again, I have no choice! I get up and it's the best thing I can think of to do and ever since I started to do it, it always has been. But aside from that, it's as much a hobby as it ever was. I get up in the morning, switch my rig on and I'm away! I just do it. And I enjoy it, so once I've done that I switch off again and then I can spend a month just reading books."

How would you like to be remembered?

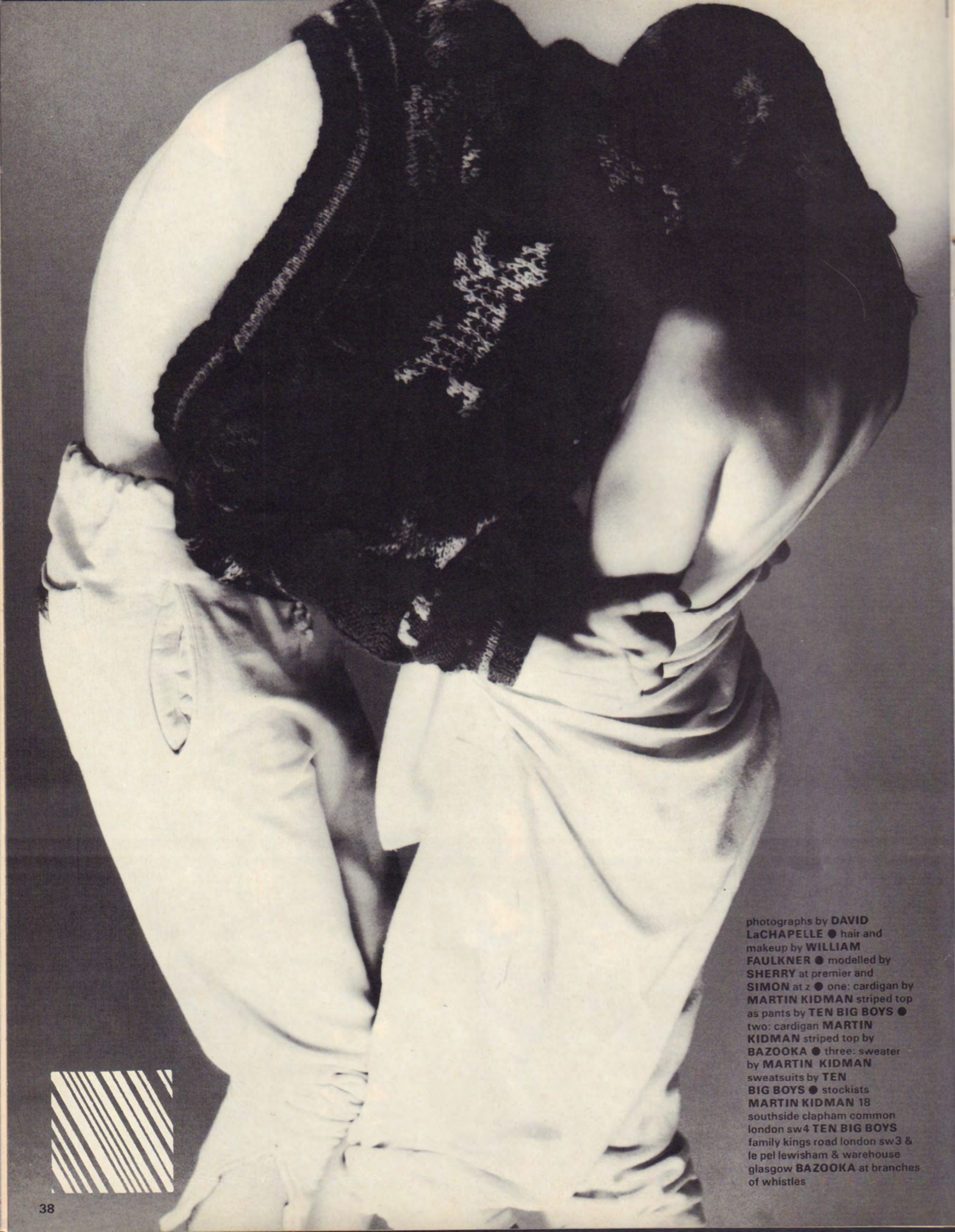
"I don't need to be, because as soon as I became a father I became redundant! But when you end up committing stuff to record, when I listen back to it, it's like a diary of events: I remember the people, the moods, stuff like that."

Are you happy to be judged simply by the work you leave behind? Presumably not, otherwise you wouldn't do interviews.

"I don't know, actually – it's something I've never considered before, so I'm taken by surprise by the question and can't think of a sensible answer. But it's a reasonable question and I don't want to give a silly answer.

"If I think of something can I let you know?" ●

STYLE



photographs by **DAVID LaCHAPELLE** ● hair and makeup by **WILLIAM FAULKNER** ● modelled by **SHERRY** at premier and **SIMON** at z ● one: cardigan by **MARTIN KIDMAN** striped top as pants by **TEN BIG BOYS** ● two: cardigan **MARTIN KIDMAN** striped top by **BAZOOKA** ● three: sweater by **MARTIN KIDMAN** sweatsuits by **TEN BIG BOYS** ● stockists **MARTIN KIDMAN** 18 southside clapham common london sw4 **TEN BIG BOYS** family kings road london sw3 & le pel lewisham & warehouse glasgow **BAZOOKA** at branches of whistles

A Fight Return

"the first cut
won't hurt at all..."

"the second only makes
you wonder..."

"you start bleeding..."

"the third will have
you on your knees..."

PROPAGANDA'S
RETURN

DUEL ztas 8

song taken from the L.P.

"A SECRET WISH" zttlq 3

ZTT
MCMLXXXV

TRENT POLY

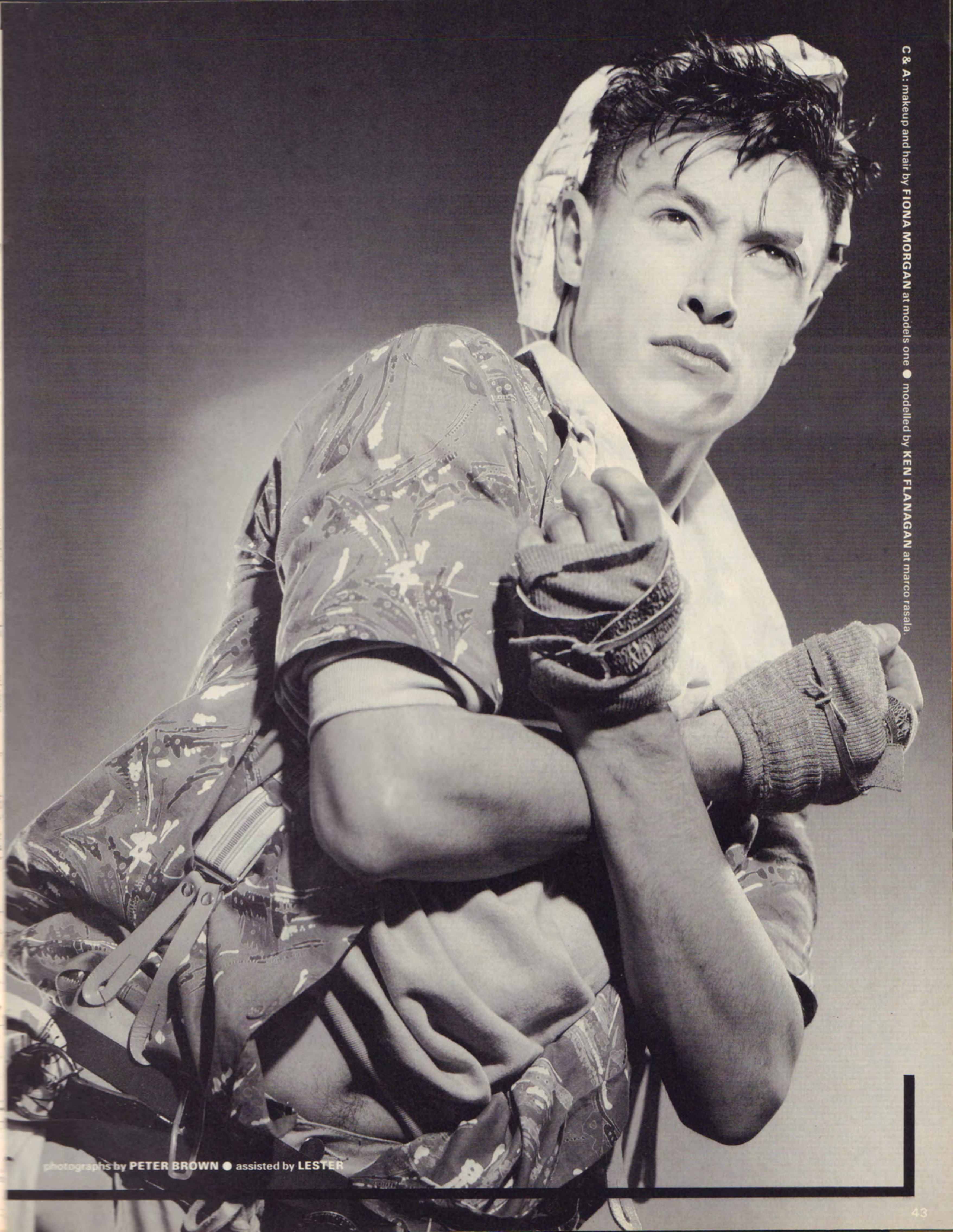
■ Today's Fashion students must expect to involve themselves in Industry during their years at college. They now work alongside, and at times inside, high intensity companies. Trent Polytechnic is no exception, with students obliged to spend at least six months of their three or four years at college earning work experience on placement. Business related study projects are also encouraged. One such project has brought together the Japanese-based acrylic yarn manufacturers, Asahi Chemicals, and the students of Trent's B.A. knitwear course. So successful has the association between the two been that they now work together on a regular annual project. The students were asked to design with four new yarns created by Asahi, and even though their brief was limiting, the finished range of garments (shown live and on video at Leicester Yarn Week during February) showed sporty, slinky yar lines, pastoral patterns, astounding expanding textures and classic contours alongside one another. Further proof of Trent Poly's success rate story: when it comes to placing knitwear students at the end of their course, Trent has a 100% success rate, with companies including Next, Detroit, M&S, and even Vivienne Westwood.

photographs by **GILLIAN CAMPBELL** ● modelled by **HILDE SMITH** ● designs by (left to right) **ANGIE JONES , JOANNE RATCLIFFE , CHRISTINA COOPER , NICOLA HANSON** .

HIGH STREET

M & S: makeup and hair by LOUISE CONSTAD at lorraine ashton ● modelled by ESTELLE at premier/mademoiselle, paris.

■ "And soon you'll get your gear from Marks and Sparks – Punks'll take over Top of the Pops..." So sang Billy Idol in 1978. So far only one of his 'predictions' has come true. The punky part, that is. But now M&S, and rivals C&A, are about to unload 'prophet' status upon Billy. It seems that the up-until-now Middle of the Road retail chains have happened upon the fact that there is a stylish marketplace full of discerning youths raised on a diet of style-obsessed pop stars, and equally stylish popular magazines. As a result, the image of men in slacks and blousons, and women in button-through shirtwaisters, has been thrown out of the window by the companies in an attempt to get a HIT on the streets. So, watch out if your mother tells you she's just popping down the shops to buy herself a new little number from her favourite fashion chain. You just might not recognise her when she returns...



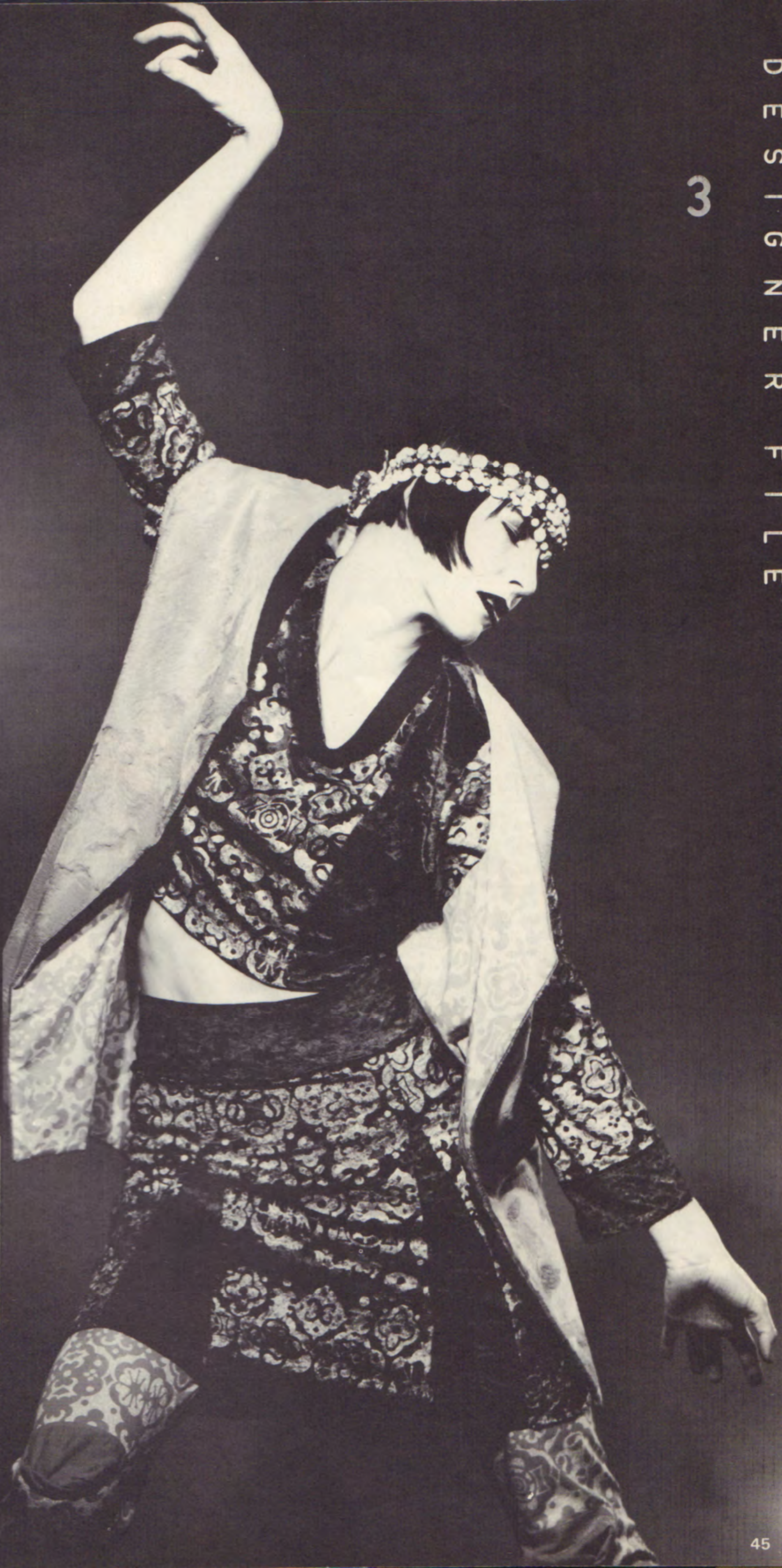
C & A: makeup and hair by **FIONA MORGAN** at models one ● modelled by **KEN FLANAGAN** at marco rasala.

photographs by **PETER BROWN** ● assisted by **LESTER**

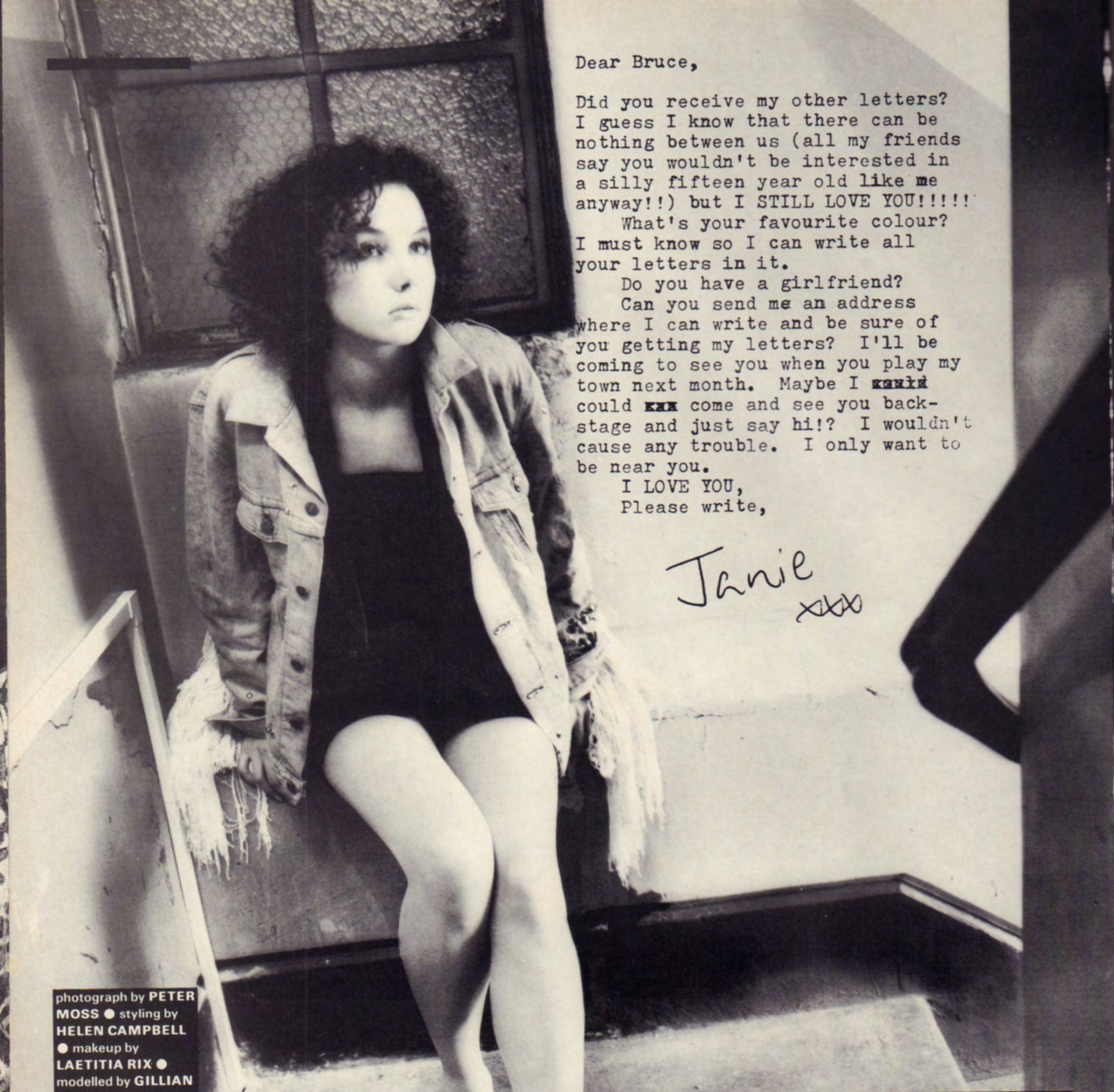
DESIGNER FILE

3

Name: **Pam Hogg.**
Professional Status: **Designer (M.A.)**
Training: **Fine Art and Printed Textiles at Glasgow School of Art, and Royal College of Art.**
Work Experience: **Freelance print designs in Paris and New York. No fashion experience, but I see it as a natural progression...**
Influences: **Travel and Film.**
This collection: **The Great Big Hippy Trip.**
Favourite films: **Exterminating Angel, That Obsure Object of Desire, Once Upon a Time In The West, Metropolis, Eraserhead, Irma La Douce, Freaks, And God Created Woman, The Mr Moto Series, any Michael Caine film, most of Fellini's and Hitchcocks, and old Indian films.**
Best dressed man/woman: **Salvador Dali, Quentin Crisp, Emma Peel, Barbarella.**
Love: **Passion, Desire, Energy, Loyalty, Humility, Compassion, Trust.**
Peace: **Freedom, Understanding, Tranquillity and Love (the hippy dream).**
First outfit I remember wearing: **A pink hipster dress and matching medallion which I forced my mum to buy me from Kays catalogue.**
Worst experience: **Too awful to mention.**
What I would like to be buried in: **Lots of white fur and red roses. Some favourite old clothes, and Seditonaries boots. My cats must be with me. Lots of white powder on my face, and bright red lipstick painted to perfection.**



photographs by **PETER BROWN** represented by angela james ● modelled by **ASTRID** at premier ● makeup by **DEBBIE BUNN** represented by lynne franks ● all clothes by **PAM HOGG** available from hyper hyper, kensington high street, london w8.



Dear Bruce,

Did you receive my other letters? I guess I know that there can be nothing between us (all my friends say you wouldn't be interested in a silly fifteen year old like me anyway!!) but I STILL LOVE YOU!!!!!

What's your favourite colour? I must know so I can write all your letters in it.

Do you have a girlfriend?

Can you send me an address where I can write and be sure of you getting my letters? I'll be coming to see you when you play my town next month. Maybe I ~~could~~ could ~~xxx~~ come and see you backstage and just say hi!? I wouldn't cause any trouble. I only want to be near you.

I LOVE YOU,

Please write,

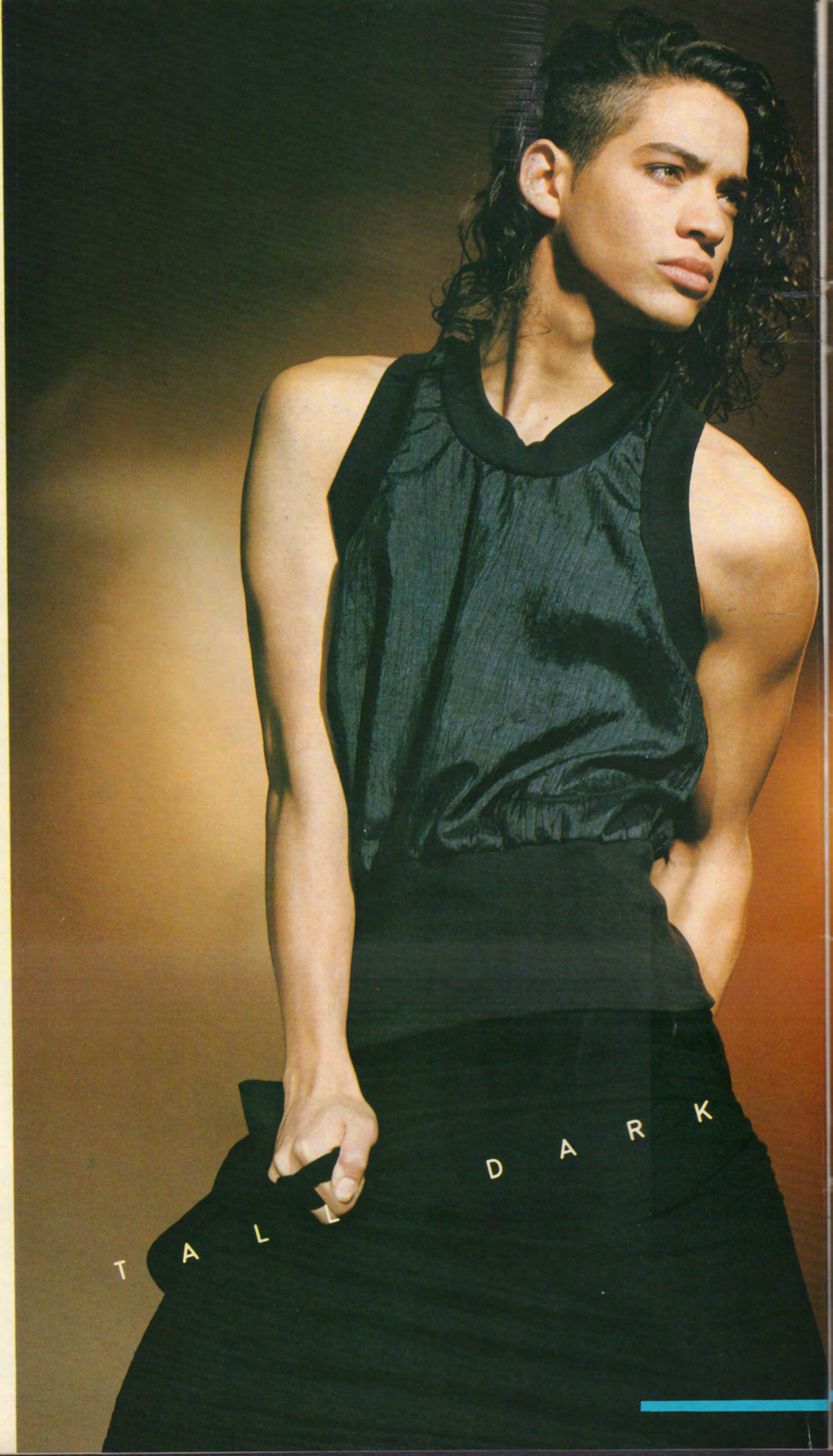
Janie xxx

photograph by **PETER MOSS** ● styling by **HELEN CAMPBELL** ● makeup by **LAETITIA RIX** ● modelled by **GILLIAN** at premier ● thanks to flicks corporation denmark street for use of location ● main picture: black wool jersey dress to order from **SWANKY MODES**, black biker waistcoat from **JOHNSONS**, customised denim jacket with fringing kindly lent by russ from spelt like this, black courts from **RAVEL** ● inset: black long fringed leather jacket from **JOHNSONS**

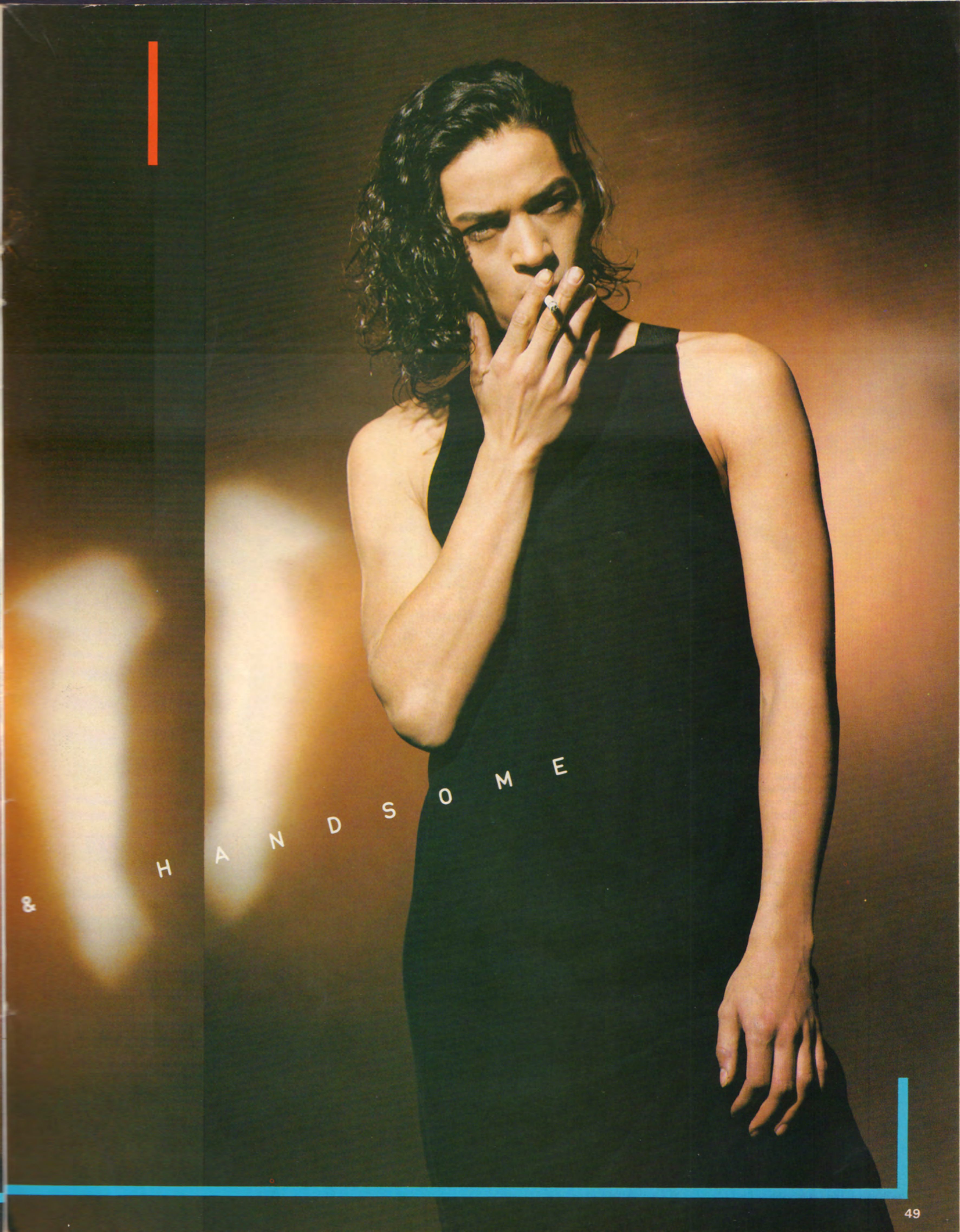
PERNOD FILS
PARIS
PERNOD
Free
the
spirit
PERNOD
PERNOD

photographs by **PETER BROWN** represented by angela james ● modelled by **BARRY CAMEN** at laraine ashton ● hair and makeup by **WILLIAM FAULKNER** ●left- top, £15, by **SUSAN BACKHOUSE** bottom, £68, from **SWANKY MODES** right – full length, £56, from **SWANKY MODES** ● **SWANKY MODES** 106 camden road london nw1 **SUSAN BACKHOUSE** hyper hyper kensington high street london w8.

STYLE



TALL DARK



& HANDSOME

FILM

- **A Passage To India**
- *A Soldier's Story*
- **Morons From Outer Space**
- *Into The Night*
- ***Plus:*** The River, Broken Mirrors, Carmen, etc.

Sir David Lean on the set of Bridge Over The River Ganges.

James Fox wonders whether to make a joke about funny habits.

A PASSAGE TO INDIA
Directed by David Lean. Peggy Ashcroft, Judy Davis, James Fox, Alec Guinness, Nigel Havers, Victor Banerjee.

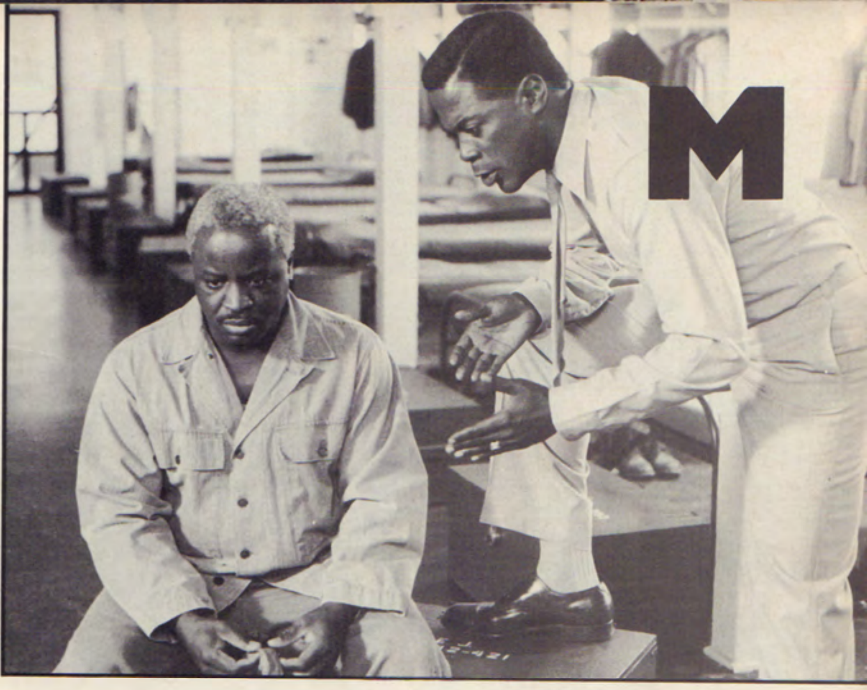
●The achievements of David Lean as director, editor and screenwriter are beyond comparison. His credentials extend from such exquisite early classics as *Brief Encounter* and *Great Expectations* to the later epics which have become his trademark (*Bridge On The River Kwai, Lawrence Of Arabia, Dr Zhivago*) and over the last twenty years his films have pulled in a remarkable tally of twenty-six Oscars between them. So it's fitting that The Return Of The Grand Old Man Of British Cinema, after a fifteen year gap following *Ryan's Daughter*, should take place in this, British Film Year.

It's all the more sad, then, that *A Passage To India* should turn out to be such a dull and disappointing film. Adapted from E.M.Forster's "classic of English literture", as the blurbs would have it, the plot (for those of you who may have dozed off in English class) goes something like this: Adela Quested, a young English girl, arrives in the Indian town of Chandrapore to marry her fiance Ronny, who is the city magistrate. She is accompanied by Ronny's mother, Mrs Moore. In her search for The Real India, Adela is introduced to Fielding, local schoolteacher and resident liberal, who in turn introduces her to Aziz, a young Indian doctor. Aziz invites them all to accompany him on a trip to the Marabar Caves, a local beauty spot. What happens there results in the trial of Aziz for attempted rape and a sudden rupture in the precarious relationship between Indians and British...

At the centre of all this lies the fragile friendship between Fielding and Aziz, assaulted on all sides by the forces of convention and ingrained prejudice. And yet... there is no real passion or feeling in Lean's film. James Fox plays a cardboard Fielding, a totally lacklustre performance, against which Victor Banerjee's Aziz can only flounder. Similarly both Nigel Havers and Judy Davis (who was excellent in *My Brilliant Career*) fail to inspire as Ronny and Adela. Only Peggy Ashcroft, as a Mrs Moore wavering between dottiness and mysticism, comes out of this with any real credit.

Visually, *A Passage To India* is as impressive as one would expect from any David Lean venture. Perhaps a less epic approach would have worked better – Lean has made a rather ponderous mountain out of what might have been a very interesting little foothill. A shame.

●TIM HULSE



Howard Rollins lays down the law to Art Evans in A Soldier's Story.

A SOLDIER'S STORY

Directed by Norman Jewison. Howard E. Rollins Jr., Adolph Caesar, Larry Riley.

●Columbia Pictures came up with a measly (in Hollywood terms) six million dollars for this film. It was crammed into a tight ten-week schedule and the director and crew made financial sacrifices in order to get it finished. It sounds surprising when you consider that *A Soldier's Story* is based on a highly successful, Pulitzer Prize-winning play, but of course it is also something else and something very unusual – a film with a predominantly black cast and which explores predominantly black concerns. *Beverly Hills Cop* it is not.

Charles Fuller's finely crafted screenplay, adapted from his original stage play, boils down to a neatly tangled detective story set in the army barracks of Fort Neal, Louisiana, as the Second World War is approaching its end. When Master Sergeant Vernon C. Waters, a black NCO in charge of an all-black company, is found murdered on the roadside outside the base, a young captain is despatched from Washington to investigate the crime, which all assume was racially inspired. His arrival at Fort Neal comes as something of a shock to all its inhabitants, officers and lower ranks alike, for Captain Davenport is not only a University-trained military attorney... he is also black. With singleminded determination, Davenport investigates what all around him assume to be an open and shut case. But gradually, as he questions his witnesses, it becomes clear that all is not as (shall we say) black and white as may have first appeared.

Without giving too much away, let us just say that *A Soldier's Story* investigates different approaches towards emancipation seen from, for once, a black viewpoint. Howard Rollins dominates the whole proceedings as Davenport – a powerful and self-assured follow-up to his impressive debut as Coalhouse Walker in *Ragtime*. He's supported by a cast which is hard to fault, special mentions going to Adolph Caesar as a thoroughly repugnant Sergeant Waters and Larry Riley as the harmless and persecuted hick from the sticks, Private Memphis. The direction is handled with admirable restraint by Norman Jewison, whose credits include the classic *In The Heat Of The Night*.

I don't think it would be going too far to state that *A Soldier's Story* represents a milestone in Hollywood history – a film about blacks and starring blacks and yet with an appeal which transcends barriers of race. What's more, it's proof, if proof be needed, that the contemporary Hollywood equation of bigger bucks equals bigger films needs to be re-examined. There's more than one lesson to be learned here. See it.

●TIM HULSE

Wacky or what? Mel Smith gets Moronic.

MORONS FROM OUTER SPACE

Directed by Mike Hodges, Mel Smith, Griff Rhys Jones.

●It's a common cinematic perception that aliens from Outer Space will be incurably hostile, incomparably intelligent and with the physical nature of a bread pudding. Not so the aliens from Blob. Beer-swilling Des and his Barbie Doll wife Sandra plus chums Julian and Bernard are as human as you and I, and blessed with an IQ rating that's lower than an average *Sun* editorial. So you can forget about them conquering the Earth.

The tale is this: Jules, Des and Sandra (Bernard gets accidentally 'marooned' in space) inadvertently crash-land just off the M6 near Luton in their 'podule'. Consequently, they are secreted Somewhere In The Home Counties to be observed and interrogated by a swarm of scientists, a Commander Matteson (Dinsdale Landen as the UK VIP in love with Sandra) and a cracked US cultural attaché (what else?). When these good residents of Blob exercise their minuscule intellectual capacity, everyone is so pissed off that they want to kill them. It's now when Graham Sweetley (Griff Rhys Jones), inefficient TV cub reporter, leaps to the rescue; they escape and he subsequently guides their careers as media and pop stars. Smart boy, eh? As for Bernard, he's undertaking his own odyssey through hospital, asylum and vagrancy which will eventually take him to Shea Stadium where his erstwhile chums play 'the gig of the century' (cough).

This gently absurd and mildly surreal story, which also takes a couple of stabs at being a musical, is Smith and Jones' first cinematic scripting collaboration. Its medium is that particular brand of British misanthropic comedy that Hancock, Python, etc., tried and did NOT excel at, with some *Close Encounters* special effects added. But it's a medium not always suited to cinema, as *Morons*, alas, indicates.

Its failure lies in the veritable plague of visual gags which, in the relatively short span of a movie, make for an overkill that effectively decimates their impact early on. The ultimate sign of good comedy – a sore jaw – is rarely encouraged. Naked men, mad old ladies, cheque book jornalists, newcasters with wigs, uncouth Duchesses, pale ale and wee-wee jokes amongst all the alien goings-on make for messy cinema. Add the musical numbers, which are *Rock Follies* belters, plonked in without thought, and ha,ha, I don't think.

Only Mel Smith saves*Morons* from absolute disaster. His Bernard has the puffed-up arrogance of an Oliver Hardy and the open-mouthed pathos of a Norman Wisdom; his facial expressions are a joy. Not so Jones, who seemingly sleepwalks through his part. His Graham Sweetley is a one-dimensional cardboard copy of all the office-boys-made-good since George Formby. *Morons*, with a tighter script and greater continuity of plot, could conceivably have made a convincing TV special. On the wide screen it's about as refreshing as a bubbling samovar of Grolsch. So much for British Film Year...

●ADRIAN JONES

David Bowie attempts to persuade Michelle Pfeiffer that Tonight was a good album after all, in a scene from John Landis' Into The Night

INTO THE NIGHT

Directed by John Landis. Jeff Goldblum, Michelle Pfeiffer.

●With a perceptible nod in the direction of Hitchcock, John Landis takes on the grisly-death-chase American thriller, to do for that genre what he did before for horror flicks with *American Werewolf In London*.

Poor Ed Okin (Jeff Goldblum) is the insomniac hero in the throes of the middle-class menopause – he's got a dull job, a suburban home, a wife who's cheating on him and he hasn't had a good night's sleep since 1980. All he wants is forty winks, all he gets is a pretty socialite (Michelle Pfeiffer) who's getting chased by gangs of murderous thugs. One step ahead of violent death, they run – or more often drive – through the more select areas of San Francisco.

Landis is a master of film comedy, and he knows that tension and laughs are an uneasy mixture. Unlike the slapstick of *The Blues Brothers* or *Animal House*, the humour here is slyly dealt out, with Ed as comic hero, haplessly falling out of his no-hope existence into a male fantasy world of riches, violence and helpless women, and observing it all with the bemused, zombie-like detachment of a sleepwalker.

It's a film of cameo roles: as the chase progresses, vaguely familiar faces appear in unfamiliar roles, like Dan Aykroyd as the concerned workmate, or David Bowie as the seedy hoodlum who leaves a few corpses behind him before exiting involuntarily through a hotel window, and proving before he does so that he's an excellent actor who can play roles other than David Bowie. The extra nod towards Hitchock – another of Landis' sly jokes – comes from Landis himself making one of these appearances, as an ugly, bungling heavy. Not only that, he's also persuaded a string of other directors to do the same. I counted twelve, but spot them for yourselves.

The only drawback with *Into The Night* is that Landis has tried so hard to make the perfect thriller that in order to keep the plot running slickly he's been forced to submerge some of the aberrant touches which made his earlier films so good. But then the tension of the sleepless pursuit makes it one of the most exhausting films you'll ever see. You'll leave yawning for the right reasons. ●WILLIAM SHAW

CARMEN

Placido Domingo, Julia Migenes Johnson.

■If Bizet were still alive, just think of the royalties he'd be getting. *Another* film of Carmen and this time director Francesco Rosi sets it in an authentic 19th century Spain with an opera star cast – Placido Domingo as the hapless, mother-fixated Don Jose and Julia Migenes Johnson (owner of an amazingly sensual voice) as that little firecracker Carmen. Set amongst the whitewashed walls and dusty mountains of Spain, it's authentic rather than stylish, sung in the original French with subtitles and with no concessions to the current vogueishness of these matters. And at two and a half hours, it's longer than most Malcolm McClaren fans would wish for.

☐WILLIAM SHAW

THE RIVER

Mel Gibson, Sissy Spacek, Scott Glenn.

■This is interesting. An intensely old-fashioned epic telling of the trials and tribulations of a farming family in Eastern Tennessee, set in the present. *The River* brings the Rural Model of the American Dream into nose-to-nose confrontation with the modern world of wall-eyed Big Business, as ciphered by the consummately wall-eyed Scott Glenn. Mel Gibson is Pop, Sissy Spacek is Mom. This is a potent and articulate morality tale of Good Ol' Rugged Individualism in discourse with community co-operation as the key to Successful Farm Life In The Face Of Adversity. Of course the pitch is rather different from when they would have used Henry Fonda in the part – Mel Gibson is forced by a bad harvest to become a scab labourer in the local Satanic Mill during a strike, where he experiences the new realities of post-industrial capitalism, is duly reviled by striking families and unceremoniously shat upon by the bosses. Let that be a lesson to you. There is a real danger in this genre that the whole edifice will run into a wallow of sentiment, but here, at least, there is no Grandpa to pop off just when things are at their blackest. This isn't *The Waltons*, y'know!

Gibson and Spacek turn in convincing performances, the children are... well, you know... but congratulations must go to director Mark Rydell for his feat of American Nuclear Family reclamation. He has taken the institution out from the clutches of wicked Uncle Stephen (Spielberg) and put it to work – in the cinematic sense! – more fruitfully than simply to go 'Eeeek!!' when the scary monsters crawl out of the TV set and onto their frozen pizzas.

The River is something to get worked up about.

☐MARC ISSUE

BROKEN MIRRORS

Lineke Rijxman, Henriette Tol, Coby Stunnenberg.

■This is simply one of the best pieces of unashamed, single-minded cinematic didacticism I've seen. A beautifully formed, dexterously and incisively written, exquisitely made, and pungently articulate film. This is the situation: Diane is broke and she takes up work at the Happy House brothel, where she is quickly absorbed into the murk and sleaze of the Amsterdam sex industry, the good points of which being the companionship of her workmates, the bad points being far too numerous to mention. At the same time, a man kidnaps a woman he does not know, locks her in a bare room and starves her to death, recording her physical and emotional breakdown with a Polaroid camera. His story then dovetails into the Happy House. Whilst I have my reservations about analysis and philosophy – we are asked to abandon a class analysis of prostitution, we are asked to forget that we are *all* prostitutes, all behave according to social forces, of which misogyny is but one – I have no argument whatsoever with the stupendous strength of the work. Director Marleen Gorris is a talent to be taken very seriously indeed. Stand in a queue for hours in the rain, if necessary; book well in advance, if that's the way it's got to be; but see this film and take a friend with you, because you'll want somebody to talk to afterwards.

☐MARC ISSUE

FAST TALKING

Rod Zuanic, Toni Allaylis, Chris Truswell.

■A lip-smackin'-fast-talkin'-huckle-buckin' movie this ain't. With as much fizz as a flat Pepsi, this self purporting Aussie comedy is about as funny as the Moral Majority putting the lid on Lou Grant. It's *Over The Edge* again with little Rod Zuanic in the Matt Dillon role looking every inch a miniature Stevie Marriott but with little charm and less charisma. He seems to spend most of his life running either from his drunken father, the school prefects or teachers (all cynical jerks, of course); he sells dope at school (when he's there), steals his way through life and doesn't give a toss about anyone except his dog. Heard it all before? In the end I couldn't have cared less what happened to the stupid little squirt. To the dunny with this one, Sheila.

☐JUDY LIPSEY

A scene from Marleen Gorris' Broken Mirrors.

FILM FEVER

★ ★ ★ ★

Time to stop whining about all the repeat movies on TV. BLITZ and CIC Home Video are pleased to present the ultimate home video competition. We're giving away ten videos, every one a guaranteed classic, and together worth around £400, to whoever can answer the three questions below.

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Rumble Fish: Coppola's elegiac and atmospheric film about two rebellious brothers in the fifties.

48 Hours: Eddie Murphy's cinematic debut as a convict freed for 48 hours by cop Nick Nolte in order to catch an escaped killer.

Rear Window: Hitchcock's classic, with James Stewart as the photographer who witnesses a murder from his bedroom window.

Streets of Fire: A rock'n'roll fantasy from director Walter Hill. A famous female rock star is kidnapped by a biker gang and her soldier ex-boyfriend sets out to get her back.

★

Now all you have to do is answer these three questions correctly:

1) The screenplay to Apocalypse Now is based on two books: one is Dispatches, Michael Herr's book about Vietnam. What is the other?
2) Several years before Scarface, Al Pacino starred in a film, based on a true story, about a man who tries to rob a small bank in order to pay for his boyfriend's sex-change operation. Name the film.
3) In which classic Hitchcock movie was Cary Grant pursued along a deserted road by a crop-dusting plane after being mistaken by James Mason for 'George Kaplan'?

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T R

A X

DAVID JOHANSEN

Words by William Shaw

Photograph by Mark Collicott

"Malcolm McLaren? He was my haberdasher for a while."

David Johansen, once of The New York Dolls, is passing through London, playing a couple of dates between a Scandinavian tour and returning to New York. He hasn't been here since 1978 so he's just over here "to dip a toe in the water, as they say."

The water seems to be lukewarm. Once there was a time when he and the Dolls breezed into a shop in the King's Road by the name of Let it Rock, made up and dressed to the nines – "the toughest bunch of dykes from New York." The man in the shop was intrigued.

McLaren became their manager, and though the whole affair never came to much it was the beginning of the shake-up. At the time the Dolls were in the process of falling apart; with guitarist Johnny Thunders departing to team up with Richard Hell they carried on for another eighteen months before Johansen finally went for a solo career. But the time has gone down in this country as a seminal piece of punk rock history.

All of this is a cross which Johansen has to bear when he comes over here, in this case to promote his latest solo LP, *Sweet Revenge*. It's a slice of throwaway goodtime rock, a continuing tongue-in-cheek love affair with the music, but a pretty directionless affair. And there's these guitars all over the place . . . "Oh, they don't like guitars in this country. You've got to remember that," he says.

He's scanning the reviews in the music press, where the reaction is of disappointment at a fallen idol: "They don't like me too much over here, do they? This guy," he says, gazing at another bad notice, "when I see him I'm going to give him one of these *(holding up a fist)*. I'm going to give him a haymaker! I think there's people here who are snobs, kind of hiding something, some basic insecurity. People who can enjoy something are much better off . . . not as anal retentive as *some* people. All the fuckin' fun you can have and this is what these people have to do for a living."

Do you find it funny when people go on about your past?

"It gets pretty tiresome. I think it's a bit silly. I just don't take it that seriously. I don't take *anything* that seriously. I mean, my life is show, and if it wasn't rock'n'roll it'd be something else, but I picked rock'n'roll and I do it damned good, that's the way I look at it. But I'm not going to die for the damn thing, you know? There's too much fun to be had..."

The trouble is that some of the humour seems to be overlooked on this side of the Atlantic – or it gets lost in the translation. Johansen is sitting there drawling away comically in his deep New York voice and I'm asking him these deadly earnest questions about politics...

"Oh yeah, this Rooskie business. When we were in Helsinki they brainwashed us up there."

The other current outlet for Johansen's expansive showbiz personality is a little act he's got going in New York under the name of Buster Poindexter.

"We have this little bar in the neighbourhood and when we're not doing a Johansen gig we might pitch a ball down there. I do my favourite songs, a very eclectic mix of stuff, soca, latins, but it's predominantly R'n'B. Basically I sit on a stool near the piano with a drink and pontificate, give little reminiscences depending on how in the bag I get. Sometimes they're long reminiscences. It's just this bar, and I'm going to be there anyway so I might as well have some fun and turn a buck."

T

BILL NELSON

- Words by Marc Issue
- Photograph by Mark Collicott

● "I have never enjoyed listening to my own records. No matter how pleased with them I may have been at the moment of their execution, I've always been extremely paranoid about hearing them again – but with this material, I can listen as if the music is coming from outside of myself. I can play these pieces and carry on working, they don't nag at me. But they have a life of their own which I find quite astonishing."

William Nelson, former guitar hero, veteran of BeBop Deluxe and the short lived Red Noise, producer of the Skids, Flock of Seagulls, Original Mirrors and Yellow Magic Orchestra, composer of old wave pop songs and theatrical soundtracks, label boss of the small but exquisitely turned-out Cocteau Records, is a voluble interviewee. He is also, paradoxically, something of a recluse, spending a good proportion of his time holed up in his Echo Observatory studio, doing the business.

"I'm using my home studio a lot more since it was upgraded to sixteen track, and just about every day I'm there, regardless of what other projects I'm working on at the time, there will be a point where to justify being alive that day, I'll put aside what I'm doing, and try to record something very short, just for myself. It's something that finds its own level and has to come out. In that way it isn't special, but it's honest – it's not dictated by anyone else."

These personal fragments formed an impressive pile over a period of time. Bill would play examples of them to friends, all of whom begged cassette copies, and some of whom urged him to release an album of them. The first collection of this material, *Sounding the Ritual Echo,* was given free with his *Quit Dreaming and Get on the Beam* album in 1980, after encouragement from Vini Reilly (of Durutti Column) amongst others. The second collection, just released, is a limited edition, four-album boxed set called *Trial By Intimacy.* It contains eighty-three examples of this particular outlet for Nelson's irrepressible creativity, along with some of his drawings, photographs and photomontages. *Trial By Intimacy* is a colossal and complicated body of work, which gradually unfolds to lend a unique insight into the workings of the musician's mind – at the same time, however, the collection is unobtrusive and restrained, allowing the listener to treat it as 'ambient sound'.

"I'm not particularly interested in composing ambient music, although I like the ideas, and I listen to Eno's ambient work quite a lot. This album could be used as ambient music in that you can put it on and forget it's there. I didn't want it to be intrusive, it was portraying a side of me that didn't have space to be portrayed in pop music, which tends to be about transience and superficiality – it's quick and instant and over with and absorbed very quickly."

Each of the four albums in the set is dominated by a different set of moods, themes, or ideas. "The most difficult part of the whole project was editing and selecting – the music was recorded very quickly and simply, on the occasions that I felt like doing it, because they weren't originally intended for any sort of public hearing. The stuff keeps growing all the time – there's another three albums' worth of material waiting for release, some of it done since this set was completed, and some of it is very old."

You might care to investigate *Trial By Intimacy,* if you can spare the time. It might prove rewarding.

● Sinners with no shame, **Then Jerico** say that what they play is rock music. The length of their hair, generally swept back from their foreheads down to their shoulders, would seem to bear this out. The particular term they favour to describe their music is dance-rock.

"It's a big grey area, rock music," announces singer Mark 'Tiplady' Shaw, "and so few bands can play it with a good up-tempo beat."

What Then Jerico have planned is a rock music that you can shake a leg to in the clubs, which is why their first single, *The Big Sweep,* produced by Martin Rushent, consists of guitars fighting their way around a jerky beat. A song, it turns out, about media half-truths: "A sort of cry for a free press, I suppose . . . not that we write overtly political songs, just ones about the way things affect us."

Despite the name, Then Jerico don't claim that they're about to bring the walls tumbling down, but their ambition not to pass through unheard have already shown an ingenious degree of enterprise. Like the time Mark and fellow founder member Jasper Stainthorpe left for New York with a bogus letter of introduction and blagged their way into the New Music Seminar showcase for new bands, and then used that to get a gig at the city's prestigious Limelight club, in front of the massed ranks of attending A & R men: one of them was from London Records, who signed them shortly afterwards.

"Our finest moment," says Jasper, "was bumping into John Taylor. He'd been trying to get a gig for Duran Duran there for ages."

William Shaw

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● Because, as Hugh says, "Pop music has been colonised by American English," **Hard-Corps** can hardly help but sound exotic, having, as they do, a French female singer named Regine. And she actually sings in French most of the time. Last year's debut 45, *Dirty/Respirer (To Breath)* – conceivably still available on Survival Records – drew comparisons with Liaisons Dangereuses, DAF: you know, those kinds of sexual tension. "There's certain kinds of seriousness that we exaggerate to the point where maybe laughter is one release valve," concedes Hugh. "It's a bit of a tease, really. Sometimes people don't really know what way to go to it." Their angular, melodic music – much of it sequenced and sampled, all of it 'played' on keyboards – indicates an equal fascination for synthetics and sexuality. It's tense in itself, and also provokes the kind of tension a listener is likely to feel when confronted with something evidently dramatic, obsessive, not nice: Do I laugh it off? Am I being wound up? My God, what if they're serious? Whatever, there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of by Pop's petty philosophy, and now that Hard-Corps have some investment from Polydor – "They've given us our own label, but I'm not sure how much of a cosmetic job that is" – they have a chance to bring some of these things back in the form of commercial art: things like dirt, viscosity, songs like *Metal And Flesh* – "A love song" – and the next likely 45, *Je Suis Passée.* Maybe produced by Martin Rushent – "He's had these problems, but he's alright now. Recovered from the Human League" – maybe not. They'd rather like to do it themselves. This Corps isn't dead yet. Go on, feel it.

Mark Cordery

PETER ANDERSON

● Every now and then we come across an artist who stands sufficiently apart from whatever else that is going on that most of our critical vocabulary goes sailing out of the window. We have to reach for new adjectives, and blow the dust off some neglected adverbs. So it is with singer Diamanda Galas, who is aberrant and absolute, brash and Bacchanalian, caustic and cathartic . . . we could go on like this, Thesaurus permitting, all the way through to zealous and back to zilch, but perhaps we should try something else instead.

In 1981 an album was released on the cute and credible Y label called *Litanies of Satan.* The performer of the two tracks contained therein was totally unlike any sort of singer we had ever heard before – Diamanda Galas was possessed of a shriek and a gasp, both so uncannily controlled, of such intensity and articulation, that we could not – repeat, not – forget it. There have been no record releases since, but Galas recently visited this country to perform with the mighty Test Department, to entertain interviews, and to prepare for some solo performances which she will undertake in the early summer.

When I met her last month, she was gathering her considerable energies for a return trip to America, with some of her books . . . "I collect books wherever I go, and haul them round with me in black garbage sacks – it makes travelling very tiring." Her speaking voice is melodic, rising and falling with her mood, translating her comments from just commentary into drama. Like her work onstage, her dialogue is demanding, she expects people to make an effort . . .

"If people take the attitude, 'I don't know much about art, but I know what I like' – or they say they don't think about what they do, they just do it, well that's fine for them, that's lovely, but if one wants to continue to do interesting things for a long period of time, that attitude is no more useful than for a boxer to say, 'Hey man, I don't need to go out in the ring, I don't need to work out in the gym, I'm just gonna take the energy I've got on the street, and just kill . . .' I heard that one before, too. The fact is, when Ali was fighting, he was trainig like a fucking *dog* all the time, you know, he was workin' his ass off. There's a complete parallel with education. To survive in this life, you need to know everything, you need to be *sharp,* 'cos if you're gonna choose not to benefit from the wisdom of others, you're gonna need the intuition of a witch doctor. There is no middle ground."

Galas has sharp teeth, and firm convictions about the directions in which to snap them . . .

"When people say, 'Ah, but she's just screaming onstage, I could do that!', I don't deny that people could do *some* of it. People think I'm just improvising, that none of it is pre-planned and so on. That's a compliment to me because I've made it appear simple. The better you get, the easier your work appears. It sounds spontaneous, and a lot of it *is* spontaneous, but that's a spontaneity that comes when I've worked at it, so I'm able to exercise my free will , and do it like *this*" – she snaps her fingers, left hand right hand – "and I'm prepared for it. I have my imitators. I don't worry about them, because they haven't put in the time on it that I've put in, and it takes time, to do what I do."

She is not given to excessive modesty – I don't imagine modesty is an urge she has much regard for. But she has got the back-up for her front, so to speak – she trains her voice with an instructor four times a week, and works out with free weights – "not to look like Farrah Fawcett, but so that I can be a mean bitch onstage, and do what I have to do. It's a job, it's a big job."

It could be argued that Diamanda Galas uses her voice like Henry Miller used a pen, or Van Gogh used a paintbrush. With passion, with certainty, with exuberance. But most of all with a sobering, stunning proficiency. You don't want to miss the experience, you really don't.

I'm not doing as well as I'd hoped in expressing my enthusiasm. But I'm not doing too badly – and I take some consolation from the fact that even the most lyrical and ecstatic reviews of her stage appearances don't do any better. I asked her at one point whether she thought her work defied accurate criticism. She turned, and smiled a malicious and predatory smile. "Well now, as a critic, I think that's your challenge . . .!"

ALAN DIMMICK

● **Del Amitri** have shown themselves to be arguably the finest of the recent spate of melodious acts to emerge from Glasgow. They've yet to prove it to the public at large, but have made a good start with their first single on Chrysalis, *I Was Here,* demonstrating the sweeter side of Del Amitri. . .

"But we *are* sweet," insists Paul Tyagi, who drums alongside Iain Harvie and Bryan Tolland (guitars) and Justin Currie (bass and voice). "It's just a pop song as far as we're concerned; there's nothing wrong with that."

They're currently engaged in putting the finishing touches to their debut LP, produced by Hugh Jones. "We were going to call it *The Horror of Sexual Intercourse,* though we can't really call it that because people *(meaning the record company)* might not like it. But that's what all the songs are about."

Which is true in a roundabout way. The product will appear later this month, doubtless under a more acceptable title.

William Shaw

X

DIAMANDA GALAS

- Words by Marc Issue
- Photograph by Bleddyn Butcher

Stevo of The Vandals

MIKE LECZKOWSKI

● **Hybrid Records** is a new label based at Statik Records which attempts, and I quote, "a union of two very different species. A new label crossing the musical impetus of a U.K. based record company with the burgeoning undiscovered talents of America and Australia (with lots of other possibilities)".

Well I don't know about you, but I'm none the wiser. Isn't this just another record company with a hankering for Aussie/Yank/whatever bands?

Quite possibly, and so having dispensed with the shell of superficial globetrotting we're left with the kernel of The Actual Records, in this case three australians and two Americans. The verdict? Well, a bit iffy I'm afraid. The antipodean **Lime Spiders, Beasts Of Bourbon** and **The Spikes** do little else than rehash our old pal The Swamp Sound, adding little to either The Standells' psychotic inspiration or the Cramps' contemporary treatment.

From America come **Guadalcan Diary,** whose garage pop is rather too lame to attract more than passing interest. On the other hand, Hybrid's other US band, **The Vandals,** do seem a genuine find. From Johnny Cash meets the Violent Femmes to an almost hip punk funk they look the Ones To Watch on the label.

A new label, but is it *that* important? I'll reserve my judgement but I'll also keep a place in my heart for The Vandals.

Paul Mathur

KEVIN CUMMINS

● *You* – a simple word – is the title of **Chakk's** follow up to the searing, tearing *Out Of The Flesh,* which in second vocalist John's words, "Gave a shot in the arm to the playlist of your average 'trendy' disco". As if to prove the point physically, drummer Dee shows the only way he could dance to it. "You just throw yourself about," he grins.

There are six Chakk-people, five of whom sit in a front room in a house in Sheffield; main vocalist Jake turns up later in a curry-house. Their 'communication officer', sometime *NME* journalist Amrik Rai, is also present. With raised voices and frequent interruptions, an enthusiastic discussion is conducted on the State of Pop, its agencies of control and its industry's inability to function without pinning down the music of a group like Chakk. "One major saw Chakk as the new Frankie," says Amrik, as the brandy gets passed around.

"We don't go out to be anything in particular," says sax-player Sim. "We don't say 'let's be weird', 'let's be non-conventional' or 'let's be commercial'." Alan adds, "We do things we feel genuine about. If it has six of us feeling good, we think there must be six other people liking it."

Currently these six people have produced *You,* a controlled compound of the funk A Certain Ratio once hinted at, held together *and* forced apart by stammering sax, a studied appliance of electronic sounds, and arrogant and agonised crooning – a moment in love (however bitter) as opposed to the orgasmic frenzy of Flesh. Chakk, in Mark's words, are "possibly the logical conclusion of the industrial funk thing."

They however are already hard at work on the next instalment.

Alan: "We were talking about doing this gig and putting on the whole night, doing the DJ-ing and perhaps involving it with the live show. They've taken scratch into the studio, I don't see why we don't take records into the live show."

Hold your breath, Chakk are worth waiting for.

Adrian Jones

PETE CARE

● Don't let the fact that they're based in Sheffield prejudice your view in any way – **Hula** are the rising new stars of the disc-crunch league, having sledgehammered their own way onto the dancefloor with the magnificent maximalism of *(No One Escapes The) Fever Car,* a fitful, fidgety, frenetic 12" encased within a Texas Photocopy Massacre sleeve. To watch it pop up somewhere between Dead Or Alive and Divine, where disco bop was replaced by subliminal hop, was one of last year's clubbing delights.

But there was more to follow. *Murmur,* Hula's second LP to date, fulfilled the promise of daring to derange in style, containing exactly what its title suggested: the noise of art, subconscious interference, emotional soundtrack. A hypnotic hysteria that (nag nag) nags at the back of the brain and stumbles over a rhythmic syntax that's as relentless as an industrial metronome. A concoction as unpredictable and volatile as Hula themselves.

From their inception in November 1980, their line-up has undergone several reincarnations, featuring at one time a Cabaret Voltaire daily help and one who later strayed off to be a Chakk. Such is incestuous Sheffield that Hula move in a circle of young men of loose musical virtue – jumping in to each other's bands as opposed to beds. At the last count Mark Albrow, Ron Wright, Nort and a recently drafted guitarist take the controls. Not a miserable bunch of be-mac'd pseudo-intellectuals but a sharp-witted collection of souls, staying just on the right extreme of cynicism to be amusing, whose out-of-Hula activities include assorted forms of art and design – hence the visual jumble sales of their artwork.

As for live performance, a Hula event is like walking into a room where the television, radio and gramophone are all playing simultaneously while someone is asking you to recite your times tables in less than a minute. A confusing, bemusing mix of image mish-mash and sound crash-bash and not recommended for grandmas or basket cases.

From the ridiculously sublime to the sublimely ridiculous, Hula wipe the floor with fanfaronade. This is entertainment!

Claire Morgan-Jones

● Springer. Piano. That's all it says on the front cover and that's all there is on the record. Not that that's not much, mind. *Piano* by **Mark Springer** is out now on Illuminated Records, and that's the easiest and one of the best things to say about it. Titles include the vague and moody *Sometime In The Rain,* the ambiguous *Slipping In Between,* the neological *Vollup.* But let's say that, in a similar context, whereas 'Jools Holland' could be suggestive to me of meat and potatoes – or maybe just a plate of greasy chips – 'Mark Springer' might suggest a Japanese meal. I chanced to meet him in a pub one lunchtime last month and he actually suggested nothing of the kind, although he did get his round in, and say quite a lot about one thing and another, including, I remember, "It's just music." Classical, jazz, popular, blues, plus of course he played piano with Rip Rig & Panic – the past is with us, so to say, but it's neither a burden nor the primary object of interest. And let's keep 'spontaneity' out of this and settle for 'unpredictability', huh? After all, Mark Springer is just as likely to appear at The Royal Festival Hall or a nightclub. Future shows include possibles with Don cherry and Ornette Coleman, and some TV slots in unusual places – The South Bank Show or Pebble Mill At One? – because he could well be considered a serious musician. If by serious you mean 'a bit good', that is.

DENNIS MORRIS

Mark Cordery

BACK ISSUES

LARGE FORMAT

4 – AUTUMN 81 Police man Andy Summers reveals all; Raiders of the Lost Ark; Gilbert & George; Haircut 100 – the first interview; James Cameron, gentleman journalist.

●

5 – WINTER 81/82 Stephen Linard & Fiona Dealey graduate shows; Marianne Faithfull; The Rock Press; Belle Stars; Patrick Caulfield.

●

6 – SPRING 82 Hunter Thompson interview; The sartorial elegance of Nick Heyward, Mick Karn, Kim Wilde, Belle Stars and Ronny; Bill Forsyth; Ugly George.

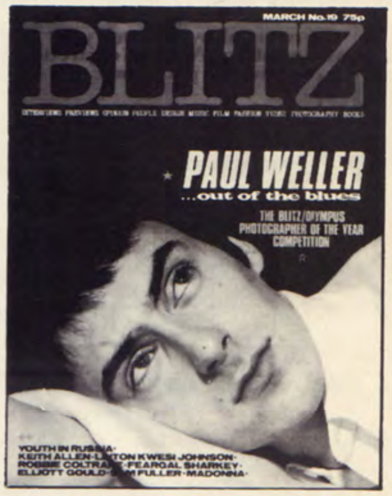
●

CURRENT FORMAT

10 – APRIL 83 Paul Morley; French & Saunders; Everything But The Girl; Tim Page's Vietnam; Return of the Jedi; Alternative Interiors; Frank Zappa.

11 – MAY 83 Julian Cope: What's wrong with British advertising?; Dennis Hopper; Bowie – Hunger preview; Art video; Worst of Hollywood; Martin Sheen; Pete Shelley.

13 – JULY/AUG 83 Record Sleeve Designers – Ian Wright, Neville Brody, Da Gama, David Band; Rick Baker special effects; Yello; Tony Wilson; Jack Kerouac; Paul Haig.



19 – MARCH 84 Paul Weller; Keith Allen; Linton Kwesi Johnson; Feargal Sharkey; Robbie Coltrane; Life in Russia; Sam Fuller; Elliott Gould.

21 – MAY 84 Marilyn & Joan Rivers; Morrissey; Billy Mackenzie & the Associates; Famous Bodies Laid Bare; Cocteau Twins; Lloyd Cole; Noel Quarless; Yip Yip Coyote.

24 – SEPT 84 Second Official Birthday issue – Nick Rhodes; Gary Kemp; Best of BLITZ; Mel Smith; BLITZ/Olympus Photography winners; Company of Wolves; Fela Kuti; Tim Roth.

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Aztec Camera • Miles Copeland
Nicholas Coleridge • Propaganda
Shock Headed Peters • Dean Bright

25 – OCT 84 Boy George writes about the media; Neil Kinnock and the selling of the Labour Party; Aztec Camera; Shock Headed Peters; Miles Copeland; Nicholas Coleridge; History of the Showroom Dummy.

27 – DEC/JAN 84 Rupert Everett; Comic Strip on location; Paul Morely meets David Frost, Malcolm McLaren, Auberon Waugh and more; Laurie Anderson; Sylvester; Janice Long.

28 – FEB 85 Anne Pigalle; Tom Bailey; BLITZ guide to the New York clubs; Jean Michel Jarre; Streetsounds; Pet Shop Boys; Morley on pop stars and music journalism.

29 – March Paul Young; Katharine Hamnett interview: Steven Berkoff; Terry Gilliam; Dennis Skinner MP; Little Benny; Suzanna Hamilton.

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